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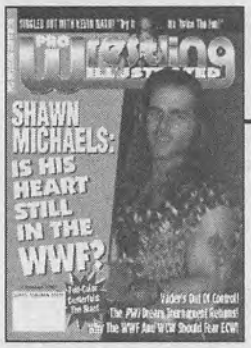
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COVER DESIGN:
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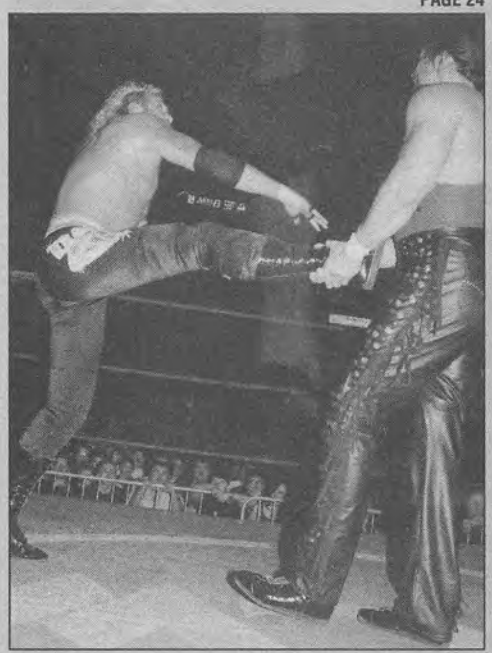

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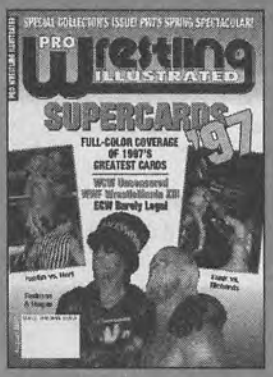
SUPER ISSUE



This spring saw three spectacular pay-per-view events presented by the two perennial powerhouses, WCW and the WWF, and the increasingly popular ECW. Our August issue had extensive coverage of all three. Which was the best? The fans chimed in with their thoughts about our special section.

"After seeing the 'Supercards' section, I think there's no reason why ECW shouldn't be given world title status," said "*PWI* Hotline" caller Trent Carver of New York City. "Their action certainly looked as good as WCW's and the WWF's!"

"Thanks for the full-color coverage of these great events," wrote Erica Lawson of Manchester, England. "I always rely upon your magazine for coverage of major events like these, and *PWI* exceeded my expectations this time!"

"I enjoyed the entire 'Supercards' section," wrote Dave Duncan of Tyler, Texas. "But I liked WrestleMania the best. It's the traditional favorite of my whole family."

A MATTER OF OPINION

After reading "The 1997 PWI Poll: Wrestling's Hottest Questions Answered!" (June 1997), I have to ask: Kimberly Page is the sexiest woman in wrestling? What were those experts thinking? Just how many times did "Diamond" Dallas Page vote?

I think Sunny is the sexiest woman in wrestling, hands-down. She has the absolutely perfect combination of beauty and brains. All she needs is a champion to manage and she'll have everything.

MIKE FERRARELLA
Maspeth, NY

OBEY THE RULES

I've noticed a disturbing trend in wrestling during the last decade or so. It is virtually impossible to tell the difference between the fan favorites and the rulebreakers. It used to be that rulebreakers were the only ones who broke the rules. Nowadays it seems like everyone is breaking the rules and that the more you break the rules, the more popular you are with the fans.

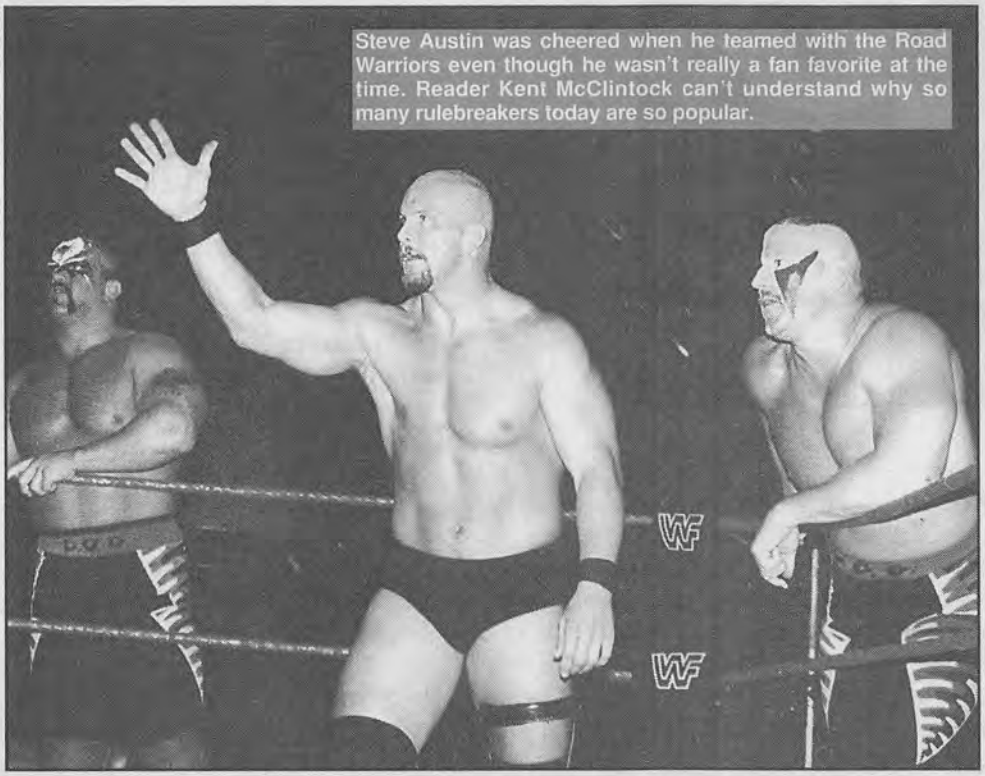
It was less than 10 years ago that everything was cut and dry. The fans, for the most part, cheered those wrestlers who followed the rules and booed the guys who broke them. You would rarely see two fan favorites battling in the ring, but now it is not uncommon to see two like-minded wrestlers matched up against each other.

KENT McCLINTOCK
San Luis Obispo, CA

"MR. MONDAY NIGHT"

Rob Van Dam is definitely too good to be wasted on a small crowd in a Philadelphia bingo hall. After seeing his debut on *WWF Raw Is War*, I can't think of any rea-

Sunny finished second to Kimberly Page in voting for Sexiest Woman in Wrestling in this year's "*PWI* Poll." Mike Ferrarella thinks she deserved the top spot.



Steve Austin was cheered when he teamed with the Road Warriors even though he wasn't really a fan favorite at the time. Reader Kent McClintock can't understand why so many rulebreakers today are so popular.

son why he shouldn't get a big-money contract from either the WWF or WCW. Van Dam is an extremely talented wrestler who would easily dominate the top wrestlers of either federation with his superb martial arts and high-flying skills. He did moves I've rarely seen used in a WWF ring, and I found myself enjoying *Raw* for the first time in a long time because of his match. Now I can't wait to see his next appearance on a Monday night show, no matter whether it's *Raw* or *Nitro*.

Van Dam proved that he deserves the chance to beat on the big boys of Monday night. Or is the WWF afraid that he will outshine the best they can offer?

BOB KINGSTON
Burlington, NJ

THE END IS NEAR

I am happy that the first cracks have formed in the foundation of the New World Order. We have seen some dissension in the group in the past few weeks, and I feel that there will soon be even more as the members of the group struggle for power. Hulk Hogan doesn't really care as long as he is involved only when his movie schedule per-

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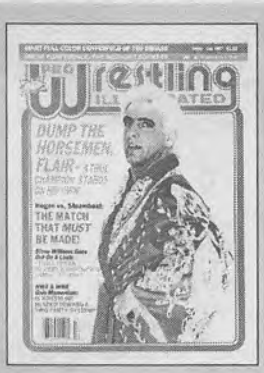
10 YEARS AGO IN PWI



The cover of the October 1987 issue featured NWA World champion Ric Flair and a recommendation for him to dump The Horsemen. Results of a poll showed that 68 percent of the fans felt his title reign was tainted because of his association with the Horsemen. It was also widely believed that Flair would not be placed in the same category as other great NWA World champions like Harley Race, Lou Thesz, and Buddy Rogers if he remained a Horseman.

Elsewhere in the magazine: Ted DiBiase was spotlighted in the centerfold ... After getting his arm broken by Eddie Gilbert and Dick Murdoch, Steve Williams "went out on a limb," vowing that he would "break Gilbert and Murdoch's arms—or quit!" ... Shawn Michaels and Marty Jannetty—The Midnight Rockers—discussed their tenure in the AWA, the notion that they were Rock 'n' Roll Express wannabes, and their possible future in the WWF.

Magazine Availability: Limited

PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED

STANLEY WESTON
Founder

PUBLISHER
Stuart M. Saks

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
David Lenker

SENIOR EDITOR
Bill Apter

MANAGING EDITOR
Brandi Mankiewicz

SENIOR ART DIRECTOR
Wendy Vetter

ART DIRECTORS
Kim Branson
Alex Krasnopolsky
Joseph Kalman
Lisa Witter

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR
Bob Eddy

PRODUCTION ASSOCIATES
Cliff Campo
Ron Frankhouser
Jackie Haag

SENIOR WRITERS
David Rosenbaum
Andy Rodriguez
Bryan Ethier
Steve Anderson
Harry Burkett

PHOTO EDITOR
Frank Vitucci

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Matt Brock
Elizabeth A. Hunter
Craig Peters

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT
Pushpak Naik

VICE PRESIDENT MARKETING
David Gerhardt

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT CIRCULATION
Kenneth J. Gudaitis

CIRCULATION DIRECTOR
Robert Nucci

ADVERTISING DIRECTOR
Carol Davis
(215) 643-6385

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PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED, Vol. 17, No. 10 (ISSN: 1043-7576) is published monthly, with an additional issue in December, by London Publishing Co., 7002 W. Butler Pike, Ambler, PA 19002. Periodicals postage paid at Ambler, PA 19002 and additional post offices. Postmaster: Send change of address notices to: Pro Wrestling Illustrated, P.O. Box 910, Fort Washington, PA 19034. Single copy price $2.95 ($3.95 in Canada, £2.25 in U.K.). Subscription price $32.80 for 13 issues in the U.S., $43.20 in remaining countries. Not responsible for the loss or non-return of unsolicited articles or photographs, which will not be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed envelope bearing the proper amount of postage. No part of this magazine may be reproduced without the written permission of the publisher. All rights reserved. **FOR ADVERTISING INQUIRIES AND RATES:** (215) 643-6385. U.S. and Canadian distribution by Kable News Inc., 11 West 42nd St., New York, NY 10036. International distribution by Worldwide Media Service Inc., 115 East 23rd St., New York, NY 10010. U.K. distribution by Comag, Tavistock Rd., West Drayton, Middlesex UB77QE, England.

Printed in U.S.A.

RINGSIDE

With Bill Apter

BRET BOWS TO THE KING: When **Bret Hart** was in the good graces of American fans, it was **Jerry "The King" Lawler** whom he hated most. That was because of all the tasteless remarks Lawler made about Bret's parents and Bret himself. I've never seen Bret wrestle with as much ferocity as he did when he was in the ring with Lawler.

Now he tells me he finally respects "The King."

"I see where Jerry Lawler was coming from," Hart said in a very candid interview. "Those fans of his in Memphis—the ones who cheer him—are like my fans in Canada, Germany, and South Africa. They see how we've been jerked around by everyone, and they refuse to let society change their opinions. Now, when I look at things through my new philosophies on life, I realize that Jerry Lawler is a great wit. I look back at some of the cracks he made about my parents and I have to laugh a little. He's a funny guy, a talented broadcaster, and a terrific artist. The people around here should treat him with more respect."

"Yeah, he's right," Lawler said when I told him of Bret's comments. "Deep in my heart, I knew he could be great if he just started seeing things my way."

TEMPER, TOMMY! Lawler doesn't know it, but he was nearly the victim of a brutal attack on the night that **Rob "Mr. Monday Night" Van Dam** made his WWF debut at the Bob Carpenter Center in Newark, Delaware. As Van Dam made his way to the ring to be interviewed by Lawler and then wrestle, ECW's **Tommy Dreamer**, who was not scheduled on the

After years of giving Bret Hart thumbs down (above), Jerry Lawler has done a 180 (right). The "Hitman" has changed his opinion of "The King," too. He says he "sees where Jerry Lawler was coming from" all this time.

Tommy Dreamer (below) came very close to making a surprise appearance on *Raw Is War* the night Rob Van Dam made his WWF debut (left). He wanted to get his hands on Jerry Lawler.

card, shot out of a dressing room and was about to follow Van Dam to the ring. Just before Van Dam opened the curtain leading to the ring, several WWF security officers stepped in front of Dreamer and warned him not to go any further.

A minor scuffle ensued, but Dreamer was quickly calmed down by **Paul E. Dangerously**. Dangerously did the right thing, but sounds like he might be regretting his intervention.

"Tommy was ready to run out and beat the crap out of Jerry Lawler," said Dangerously, "something he's dying to do. Had I not been here, Lawler would be a dead man right now, and we at ECW would have been very happy."

Dangerously went on to say that he and Dreamer had shown up at the building "just to watch Robbie's back," knowing that there are people in the WWF who would love to cripple any ECW wrestler. "I know he's said some bad things about ECW, but for now, Rob Van Dam is with us, and we look out for our own," Paul E. said.

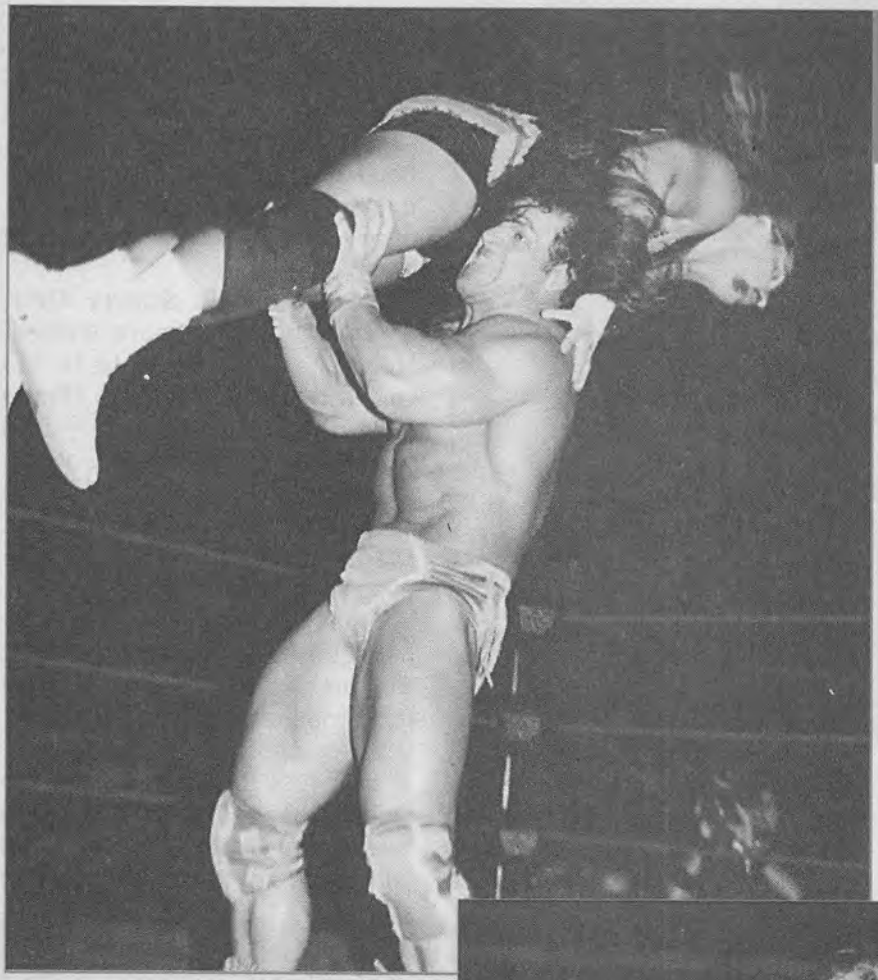
MILLIONAIRE MUTO? Keiji Muto is in the middle of a three-way bidding war for his services. First of all, the NWO has been trying to get him and has told him that "no number is too high," according to **Eric Bischoff**. Muto, however, hates the NWO and what it stands for, and has said he won't compromise his principles for any amount of money.

Next there is **Sonny Ono**, whose funds are more limited. He'd like to bring Muto to the United States to team with **Ultimo Dragon**. Muto reportedly told friends he doesn't know Ono too well, but that the idea of a partnership in the United States with Dragon is "interesting" and "something to consider."

Finally, and you might not believe this one, **Rick** and **Scott Steiner** say that they can and will try to outbid everyone for Muto's U.S. services.

"We just teamed with him in Osaka against **Scott Hall**, **Kevin Nash**, and **Masa Chono**," Scott told us. "We were so excited to find

Keiji Muto stomps on the NWO's Scott Norton as he tries to get a pinfall. Muto has a big decision to make. Does he sign with the NWO, join Sonny Ono's camp, or make a deal with Rick and Scott Steiner?



Scott Putski's WWF debut was a success—he defeated Leif Cassidy. Afterward, though, he was wondering if he might have to deal with some of the same problems Dustin Rhodes faced.

Rhodes' speech about being in the shadow of his father all those years," Scott Putski said. "I've had similar problems. When I came into the building tonight, lots of fans were yelling 'Polish Power' and asking how my dad was doing rather than just concentrating on my debut. That's great how well they took to my dad, but I hope if I stay in the WWF for a while that I'm not just known as 'Ivan's kid.' I worked very hard to get here, and I really want my own identity."

SHORT SLAMS: The Ultimate Warrior is negotiating with Ultimate Championship Wrestling

Is the world ready for *another* Ultimate Warrior comeback? We last saw him in the WWF last summer, but now he's talking to promoters in New York-based Ultimate Championship Wrestling.

someone in Japan who hates the NWO as much as us, so we called on an old friend who can gather a few investors to back us for the deal. We've contacted Muto and hope he'll get back to us soon."

My attempts to get Muto to comment on any of the offers have been fruitless so far. Like Sting, he prefers to remain silent in public. I don't think he will ever join the NWO's cause, but I wouldn't be surprised to see him with either Ono or the Steiners. If only we were all lucky enough to have so many offers!

POLISH POWER PROBLEM: For years, **Scott Putski** was rumored to be bound for the WWF, but he didn't make his debut in the federation until this past May when he defeated **Leif Cassidy**. As thrilled as he was with his debut, though, he had something else on his mind afterward.

"I was really moved by Dustin

The Honky Tonk Man thinks he's managing a future WWF Intercontinental champion in Rockabilly (the former Billy Gunn). Rockabilly's brother, Bart, who recently won the PCW Americas belt, thinks otherwise.

promoters about wrestling a series of matches for them. Nothing had been finalized as of press time ... The AIWF is having trouble dealing with a new giant wrestler. He's a 6'8", 350-pound monster known as **Bodycount**. He has already attacked heavyweight champion **Major Havoc** and injured both **Cyclone** and **Dr. Love**. Broadcaster **Matt Carter** has tried to speak with the mysterious man, but he refuses to do interviews and is demanding that promoters sign him to a title match against Havoc immediately. If they don't, he says he'll keep attacking wrestlers at random.

Bart Gunn has defeated **Lance Diamond** to become the new PCW Americas champion. "It's really just the start of a singles career I have embarked on, and this is my first step toward huge success," Bart says. "Too bad that my brother **Billy**, or should I say **Rockabilly**, has **The Honky Tonk Man** with him in the WWF. That guy will be his doom."

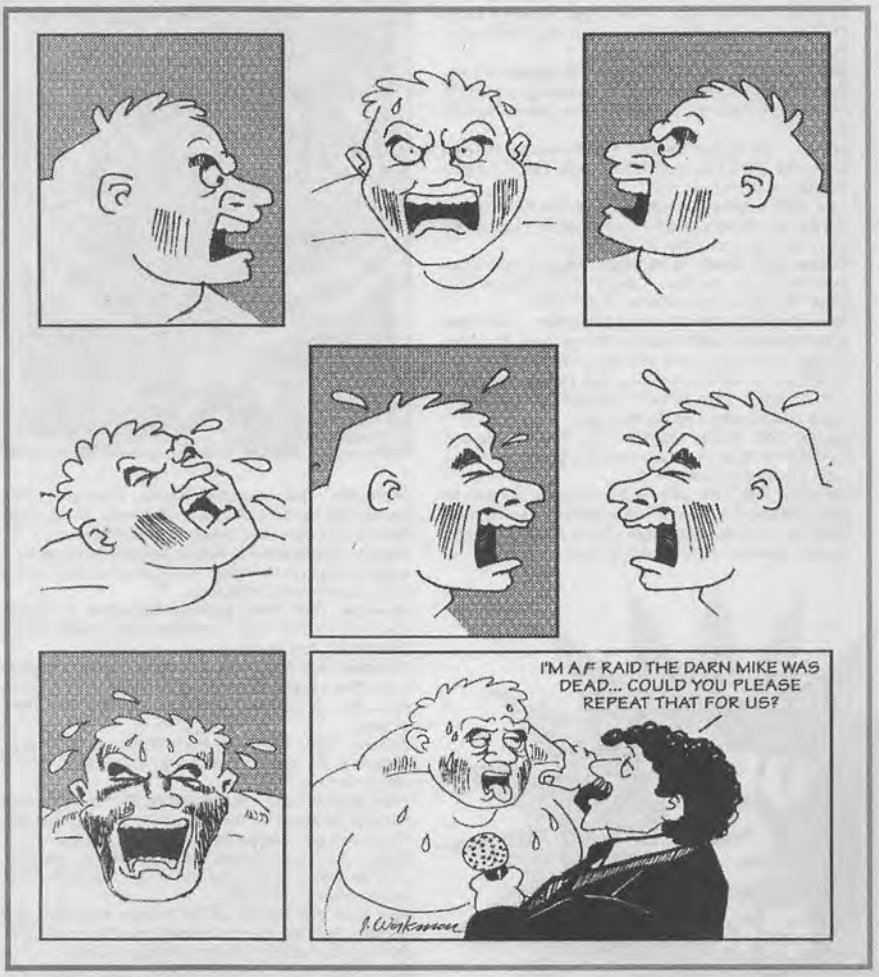
"Me and Rockabilly have all the kinks worked out and you should see him, with the greatest Intercontinental champion in history as his manager, go on to become a fine Intercontinental champion of his own," Honky Tonk Man said.

Bart defeated HTM on several PCW cards this spring.

Snot Dudley is feuding with **Joe Defuria** in Sunshine Wrestling Federation rings ... **Mikey Whipwreck** has returned to the ring in ECW after sitting out several months with a knee injury ... IWGP heavyweight champion **Shinya Hashimoto** pulled off one of the biggest victories of his career this spring. After accepting a challenge from and losing to world-class judo competitor **Naoya Ogawa** several months earlier, Hashimoto beat him in a rematch in front of 53,000 fans at the Osaka Dome.

"I admit to being very nervous going into this monumental battle," Hashimoto said, "and I am glad I came out on the winning end." Hashimoto won when, after connecting with several brutal kicks to Ogawa's face, Ogawa's second, **Satoru Sayama**, threw in the towel for his man.

That's all for now. See you at ringside! □



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October 1987: Dump The Horsemen, Flair—A True Champion Stands On His Own. Centerfold: Ted DiBiase. Plus: Hogan-Steamboat, Steve Williams, NWA & WWF.

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June 1988: Is The End Near For Hulk Hogan? Centerfold: Tully Blanchard. Plus: Midnight Rockers-Kelly & Kiniski, Al Perez, Dusty Rhodes, Magnificent Muraco.

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August 1989: Super Sunday—Hulkamania Reborn! Ultimate Warrior Dethroned! NWA Stunner! Centerfold: Lex Luger. Plus: Steamboat-Flair, Dusty Rhodes.

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February 1990: Luger's Holiday Gift For Flair: Has The "Total Package" Wrapped Up The NWA Title? Centerfold: Bret Hart. Plus: Hulk Hogan, Woman, Hennig-Beefcake, Toni Adams.

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September 1990: The Hulkster's Wrath: 7,000 Miles To Violent Redemption. Centerfold: The Steiners. Plus: Jeff Jarrett, Sting, Destruction Crew, Four Horsemen, Curt Hennig.

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November 1990: Sting Wins The NWA World Title! "If This Is A Dream, Don't Wake Me." Centerfold: Road Warriors. Plus: Rude-Warrior, Ric Flair, Funk-Hansen, muscle and power.

December 1990: New Blood—And Bad Blood—In The WWF. Centerfold: Sting. Plus: Four Horsemen, Kerry Von Erich, Doom, Eddie Gilbert, Sgt. Slaughter.

February 1991: WrestleMania VII Contest. Centerfold: 1991 calendar. Plus: Sid Vicious, DiBiase-Rhodes, Scott Steiner, Power & Glory, Terry Funk.

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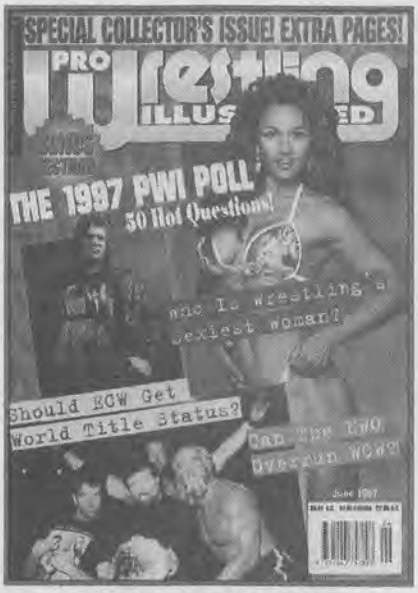

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July 1995: Hulk Hogan: "I Can't Take It Anymore!" Centerfold: Bam Bam Bigelow. Plus: Kevin Sullivan, USWA blood, Yokozuna, Savage & Sherri, revitalize the WWF.

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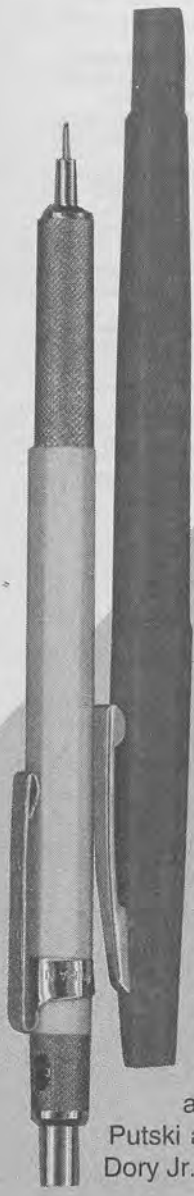
FROM THE DESK OF...

Stuart M. Saks

KEN GRIFFEY SR. and Ken Griffey Jr. are father and son and best buddies, too. Bobby and Barry Bonds are as tight as can be. Former heavyweight champion Floyd Patterson and his son, former junior lightweight champion Tracey Patterson, do not speak. Ken Norton Sr. and Ken Norton Jr. just recently reunited after years of acrimony.



Obviously, it would be a mistake to draw a blanket conclusion about the relationships between professional athletes and their offspring. One factor is common in all: The child of a pro athlete will have to grow up without a father in the home for extended periods of time. Having a pro athlete for a father might be financially rewarding for the family and help the child become more popular in school, but to go through life with a part-time father will doubtlessly be a shaping factor in the child's life. How that will play out as the child reaches adulthood is impossible to predict. The Griffeys and Bonds did fine. The Pattersons and Nortons did not. In wrestling, Larry and Curt Hennig did fine, as did Ivan and Scott Putski and Dory Funk Sr. and Dory Jr. and Terry.

But Bruno Sammartino and David Sammartino? Bill Dundee and Jamie Dundee. Dusty Rhodes and Dustin Rhodes? At best, they don't speak. At worst, they feud.

While looking through the July 1991 edition of *PWI* to check out the format of the last *PWI* Dream Tournament, I happened across the "Desk Of..." column I wrote for that issue.

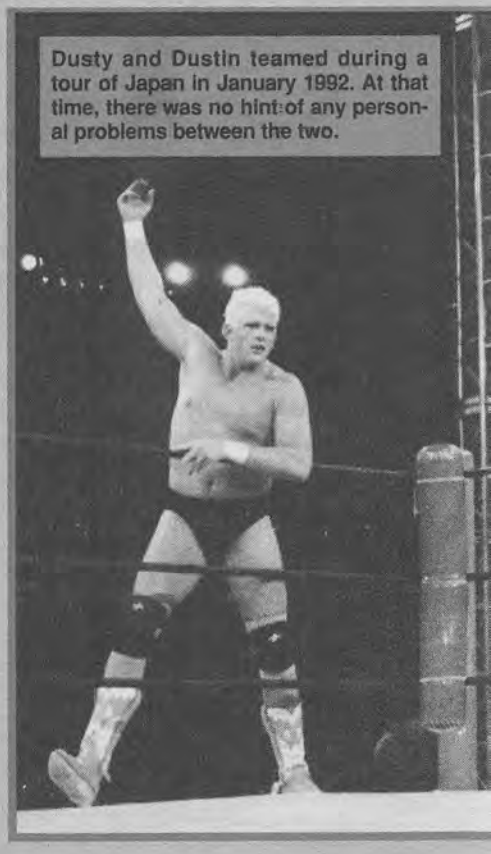
The central figures of the piece were Bill and Jamie Dundee. The column focused on the tragic rift between father and son, how Bill accepted the blame for his son's deplorable behavior because of his admitted shortcomings as a parent. The breaking point came after Bill used his connections to get 19-year-old Jamie a job as referee. Being a referee is certainly no job for a boy, and that's exactly what Jamie was. In one match between Steve Austin and Dan Davis in Memphis, Jamie showed blatant favoritism toward Austin (and his gorgeous valet, Jeannie Clark). The match had to be stopped by matchmaker Eddie Marlin, who fired young Jamie on the spot. When Jamie threw a mini-tantrum, Bill came out and gave him the spanking he probably should have given him 10 years earlier.

While they would enjoy a brief reconciliation years later, it would not last. There's been too much hurt. Too much has been said that can never be taken back.

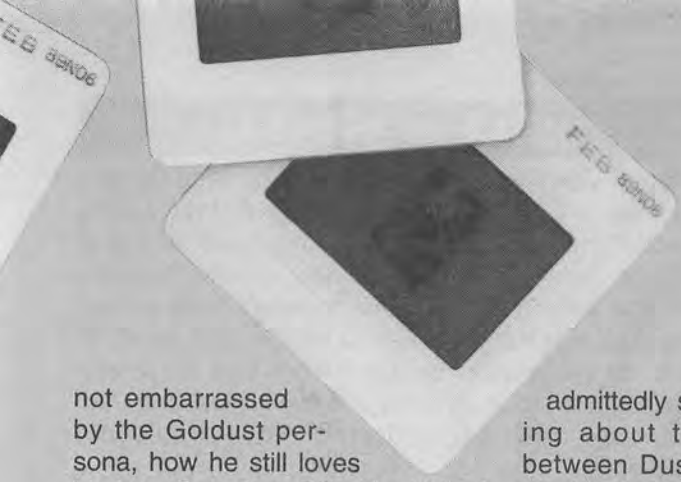
On the other hand, nothing's been said between Dusty and Dustin Rhodes for a few years. They live within an hour of each other in Georgia, yet they are worlds apart. For the record, Dustin says he idolizes his father; Dusty says he's proud of his son. The way they talk about each other, you'd think they would think theirs is a wonderful relationship, but if there is indeed a thin line between love and hate, they're both straddling it.

The day after Dustin gave his now-famous "Goldust Freed Me From My Father's Shadow" interview with Jim Ross on *Raw Is War, PWI's* Bill Apter called Dusty for his reaction. Bill has known Dusty for more than 20 years. Their relationship is special. Dusty once told Bill that he's part of the Rhodes family. Yet when it came to discussing Dustin, Bill could tell that he was holding back.

He'd say how much he admires his son's accomplishments, how, contrary to common belief, he is



Dusty and Dustin teamed during a tour of Japan in January 1992. At that time, there was no hint of any personal problems between the two.



not embarrassed by the Goldust persona, how he still loves his boy. But when Bill asked him if they'd be seeing each other for Father's Day, Dusty said no. There were problems, big-time problems, personal problems, that would make that impossible.

As one of the few people close to both Dusty and Dustin who doesn't have political allegiance to either the WWF or WCW, Bill would be a unique position to serve as a mediator between father and son. He offered his services to both. Both answered negatively. It wasn't even a case of who would make the first move; the hurt on both sides is too great to put aside.

When Bill told me that, I was admittedly stunned. I knew nothing about the deep problems between Dusty and Dustin. I figured that working for rival organizations would probably be uncomfortable at times. And I assumed that a man's man like Dusty Rhodes, as flamboyant a performer as he was, would be very upset by his son playing the part of the outed movie star. But I also pretty much figured that one day Dustin would shed the ridiculous Goldust getup, grab his cowboy boots from the closet from which he had apparently emerged, and get back to serious work. Well, that kind of happened. Goldust did reveal himself to be Dustin Rhodes, even admitting that Marlena (Terri) was actually his wife. He says the creation of the Goldust character was his way of freeing himself from the considerable shadow cast by his 300-pound dad. Presumably, nobody would ever confuse Goldust with the son of a plumber.

Though they never spoke about it, Dusty never had any doubt what his son's purpose was for the creation of Goldust. He knew the time would come when Dustin would come to resent the comparisons to him. Before Dustin's pro debut in 1988, the two spoke about Dustin not even using the Rhodes name. But then they decided that would be pointless. Too many of the people in the business knew Dustin, and the fans would quickly catch on based on physical resemblance alone.

It's uncanny how much these men look alike. In fact, it's uncanny how much these men *are* alike. They are both good-natured sorts who would do anything for you. They both like to have fun, but can be deadly serious when it's appropriate to be so. They're both devoted family men. They both get tremendous enjoyment entertaining their fans.

But they are also both stubborn and pigheaded. When there's a problem between people with those character traits, it becomes nearly impossible to work out these kinds of problems. They also tend to hurt a little more when they feel they are wronged by someone close to them.

Perhaps one day they'll both come to the realization that the connection between father and son is too special to be allowed to smother in bitterness. If Bill Apter can't help them see that, maybe they should call Bill and Jamie Dundee. Father's Day may never be the same in their lives either.

* * *

My special thanks to go out to the guys that have made it possible for readers to participate in the "*PWI* Dream Tournament" online *(see page 62)*. Allan Barrie, Jerry Pectol, and Jim Finch are hosting the site on the world wide web, while Brett Schwan and Jim Brambilla are hosting the America Online site. □

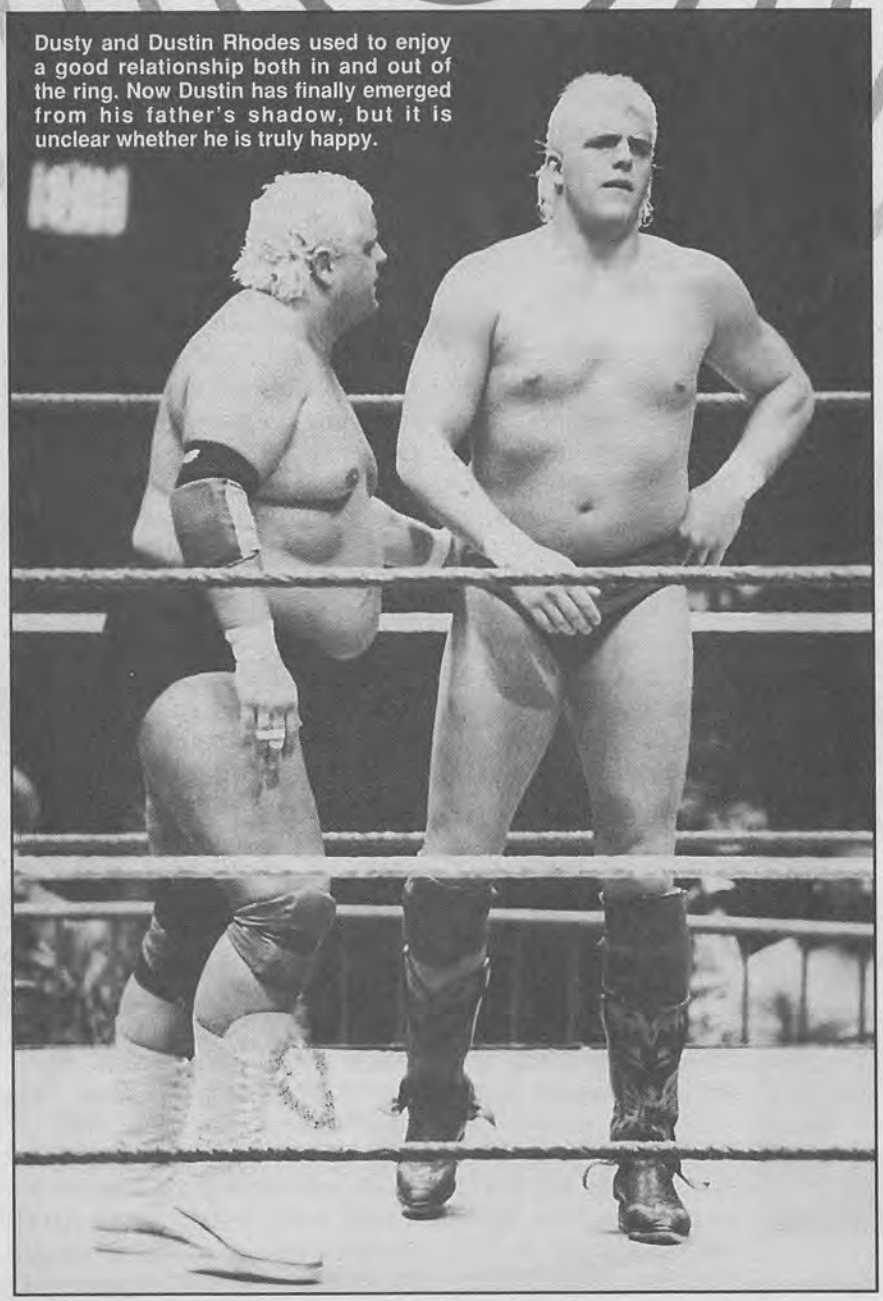
in focus

By Dave Lenker

MALE BONDING

Three years ago, Dustin Rhodes decided he was carrying around a ball and chain named Dusty Rhodes. He had spent much of his youth sitting at ringside watching his famous father wrestle, or sitting at home waiting for his father to return from a long, long road trip. He never had to decide what he wanted to do with his life because there was never any question. He would become a wrestler, just like Dad. Kennedys become politicians. Rhodes become wrestlers.

Dustin knew from the start, as did everyone else, that being Dusty's son would open doors for him. He had the name and the connections, so now all he needed was the drive, and he had that, too. Doors opened and he was ushered through. He made his ring debut in 1988, and by 1991 he was WCW World tag team champion with Rick Steamboat. In 1992, he won the tag title again, this time with Barry Windham. By 1993, he was WCW U.S. champion. He was voted Most Improved Wrestler of 1991 by the readers of this magazine, and it seemed like only a matter of time before he won the WCW World title.



Dusty and Dustin Rhodes used to enjoy a good relationship both in and out of the ring. Now Dustin has finally emerged from his father's shadow, but it is unclear whether he is truly happy.

Then things stopped happening for him. He got a few World title shots, but never came close to winning. He started losing more and more matches, something a Rhodes just doesn't do, and got mired in a deep slump. His father tried to lift him out of the doldrums, suggested it was time for him to "step it up," but it was all for naught. Dustin's problems were not physical. They had nothing to do with his ability. His problems were mental.

Or so we're supposed to believe, because in 1995, Dustin started wearing makeup and a gold bodysuit. He called himself Goldust and his persona was one in which he appeared to be a cross-dressing homosexual who infuriated opponents by kissing them. The reward for Dustin's sudden change was fame. He became one of the most hated wrestlers in the world. In 1996, he became WWF Intercontinental champion, too. And little by little, even though just about everyone knew the man under the makeup was Dustin Rhodes,

Goldust became respected for his wrestling ability rather than for just being Dusty's son.

But the penalty for all this was that Dustin and Dusty haven't spoken in more than two years and Dusty admits they might never have a real father and son relationship again.

"I love him and wish him the best of everything," Dusty told Senior Editor Bill Apter. "I am very proud of him. I always taught him to take care of your own. He's doing that right now with his business and with his family ... Dustin made Goldust happen. He is out of my shadow, and I'm proud of him for that."

Dusty claimed that he was never embarrassed by the unconventional Goldust character. Rather, he is saddened by his inability to retain a normal, loving relationship with his son. As for Dustin, he said, "I was living in the shadow of my father for so long. I had to get out and see if I could make it without anyone putting the two of us in the same sentence."

The media, of course, is as guilty of this as anyone, even though it's a perfectly natural inclination. Greg Gagne never equalled the accomplishments of his father, Verne Gagne, but Curt Hennig became more famous than his father, Larry Hennig, and Randy Savage took over where his father, the great Angelo Poffo, left off.

The problem, however, was that Dusty had an overwhelming personality and couldn't resist opportunities to help out his son or make the going a little easier. Dustin suffered for this, and so did their relationship. He used extreme measures to get past the comparisons, changing his identity completely. He is a success now, but I wonder: Is he truly happy?

It appears safe to say the WWF has a future superstar on its hands in Ken Shamrock, the man who humbled Big Van Vader at In Your House in May. But does Vader have a secure future with the WWF?

A TALE OF TWO WARRIORS

In one of the more remarkable results of recent years, Ken Shamrock forced three-time former WCW World champion Big Van Vader to submit to a leglock in their match at the May 11 In Your House. Why so remarkable? It was Shamrock's first major WWF match.

Depending upon how you look at the match, either Shamrock, a former Ultimate Fighting champion, is the fastest rising star in wrestling or Vader is the fastest falling star. Or maybe Vader's arrest in Kuwait and his subsequent trouble was getting to him. Or maybe it was a fluke, although nobody seems to believe that angle. Shamrock came out storming, Vader tried to respond, and Shamrock kept going until he bloodied Vader's nose and got him into the leglock.

"I can't get carried away with one win," Shamrock said. "I know I beat a great wrestler, and that's important to me, but there's a long way to go before I reach my ultimate goal, which is to be World champion. This is going to take a lot of hard work. A lot of people were impressed by what I did, and I appreciate that, but I'm going to have to work a lot harder than I already have in order to reach my ultimate goal. Come back and talk to me in a few months."

We will.

Vader, infuriated by the loss, wasn't talking to the media much afterward and might not be around in a few months the way he's going. The WWF higher-ups don't like has-beens, especially has-beens who have been arrested. It looks like one career is rising and another is falling. □

off the top rope

by Brandi Mankiewicz

If you wish to contribute to Brandi's mailbag, send your letters to:

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(Editor's note: The opinions expressed in this column are those of the letter writers and Brandi Mankiewicz herself. They do not necessarily reflect the editorial views of this magazine.)

THE HART FOUNDATION is back ... and they're mad as all get out. Oh, goodie, another rulebreaking clique with designs on promotional domination. Yawn. Remember The Four Horsemen? No, not the current four-plus version that is more of an occasional family reunion with shirttail cousins hanging around.

The first few incarnations were true units. They traveled together and kicked butt together. They didn't want to overtake any promotion. They didn't want to occupy the front office. They didn't want their own pay-per-view. They just scared the bejeezus out of anyone who crossed them.

Now we have The Hart Foundation joining the mix. This dysfunctional clan has had some success already (at press time, the group controlled all WWF titles but the World belt), but I don't see them working together for long (too many skeletons in the closet—but enough about Helen), especially with the Bryl-Creamed baby at the helm. Hey, Bret, how 'bout some cheese with that whine?

The Hart Foundation may hold a lot of gold, but I am your champion.

Dear Princess Brandi:

Do you think Sting will ever go back to his normal face paint and regular haircut? I believe Sting is scared because people probably thought he was a wimp with his pink tights and short haircut. What are your comments on the "wimpy" Sting vs. the "manly" Sting?

SCOTT OSHEFSKY
smmelde@juno.com

Dear Scott:

"Wimpy" Sting vs. "manly" Sting? Do me a favor, don't give the "Dream Match" writers any ideas. To me, it's hard to believe that Sting has finally shown his true "colors." He dumped WCW, apparently joined the NWO, then dumped the NWO, and now kinda sorta is with WCW. WCW analysts say the change in Sting's physical appearance is a result of deep emotional scars. Yikes.

Get over it. Sting could very well be the wrestling equivalent of Oprah Winfrey. Don't like the latest look? Wait 'til tomorrow, because it should change.

I'm sick of talking about the significance of Sting's new look. Does it really matter what color he paints his face?

I agree that the match between The Ultimate Warrior and Hulk Hogan at WrestleMania VI was one of the most important in recent memory, but it happened seven years ago! Let's move on already.

Dear Brandi:

I was just watching a tape of WrestleMania VI, when Hulk Hogan and The Ultimate Warrior went at it. Hogan knew he lost, but he handed the WWF belt over to the Warrior like a man. Why doesn't he do that anymore?

RUSS WILLIAMS
West Deptford, NJ

Dear Russ:

I won't even get into why you were re-watching an entire pay-per-view and then providing me with analysis. I think it's time for you to meet someone that you haven't seen for a while: the sun. And that blue thing you see up above is the sky, but I'm not sure what color it is in your world. As for Hogan, what else was he supposed to do? He had to play up his hero image. Besides, los-

ing the belt allowed him to lighten his already-light schedule and gave him time to make more straight-to-video movies.

Dear Brandi:

What do you think of Dennis Rodman joining the NWO? If there was ever a basketball player cut out for wrestling, especially the NWO, it has to be "The Worm." Now basketball's bad boy is WCW's problem. NWO for life!

JOSEPH AUGSBURGER
Highland, CA

Dear Joseph:

I can't decide if I don't care or I don't care. Frankly, I find the latest infusion of non-wrestlers into WCW to be a tad alarming. Are they responding to a matchbook cover ad that says, "You, too, can be a wrestler"? I can see it now: a new Gorgeous George who doesn't primp and preen, but instead kicks people in the groin. Could you say that his foray into wrestling strikes me as a "drag"?

Dear Brandi:

Wouldn't you like for The Ultimate Warrior to come back to the WWF and face Shawn Michaels?

TONY BERTON
Fort Worth, TX

Dear Tony:

For the record, the quota for Ultimate Warrior references in this column has been exceeded for the decade. Even though I'm not a fan of the clown-faced freak of wrestling, I would love to see his fist meet Shawn's newly found smile. But then again, the idea of the Mary Kay maniac getting his mascara smudged is almost as delicious. Tough choice ... and a tough match to promote. Could they fit an announcer and a ref in the ring with those two enormous egos?

Dennis Rodman is flamboyant enough and has the right attitude to fit in with the NWO, but the group would be a lot stronger if more people who knew something about wrestling were added.

Dear Brandi:

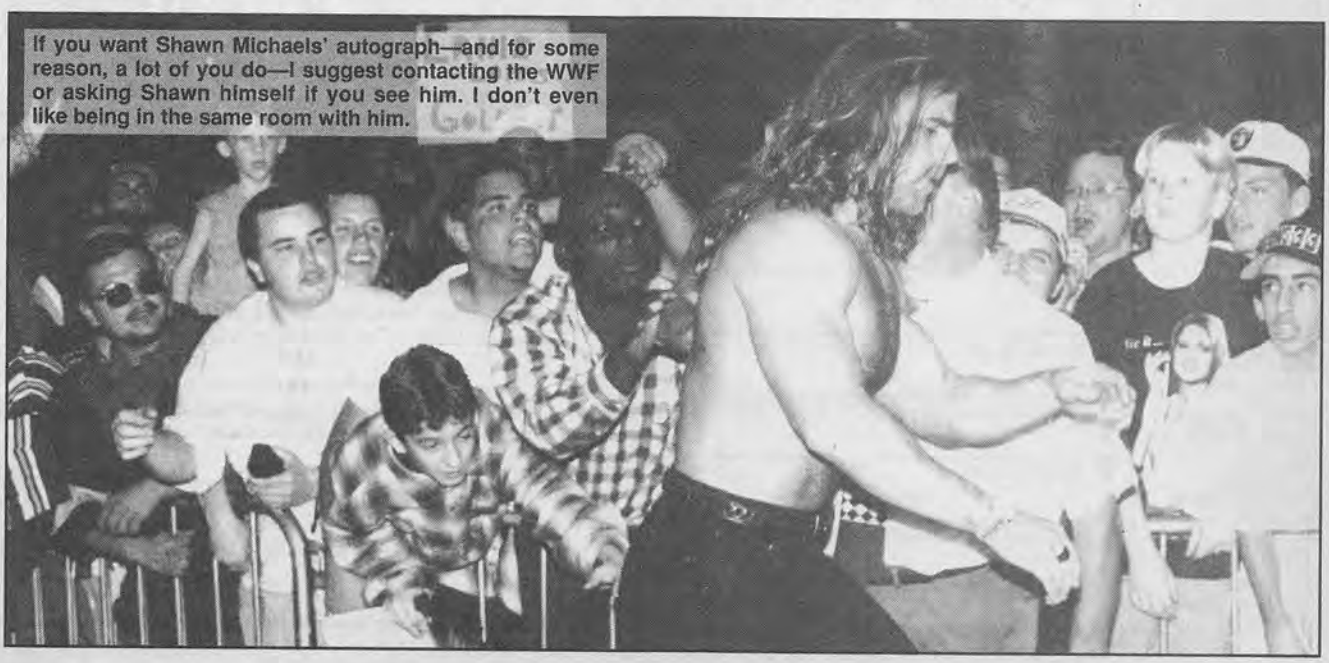
Every time I call those long wrestling hotline numbers, they start to ring after the seventh number. Please tell me how to do this. I'll write back if it still doesn't work. Also, send me a few autographs. Please give me Shawn Michaels', Rocky Maivia's, The Undertaker's, Bret Hart's, and the Legion of Doom's. Please send the autographs in a big yellow envelope.

BRIAN GUTHRIE
North Irwin, PA

Dear Brian:

(Deep breath ... deep breath)

Brian, my dear, I want you to do something for me. I want you to wait by your mailbox like a good and loyal follower of the "Queen." Today I am mailing you the following in a big yellow envelope: an instructional guide on the fine art of touch-tone phone dialing. You'll be out of luck if you have a rotary phone or have to crank the side and ask for Martha. Second, I will also enclose the autographs you've requested. Then you will need to put on a nice warm jacket, because a very hot place will soon become very cold. And check your Shawn Michaels' fan club newsletter, because it will list me as president. Get it? □



If you want Shawn Michaels' autograph—and for some reason, a lot of you do—I suggest contacting the WWF or asking Shawn himself if you see him. I don't even like being in the same room with him.

TAKE US ON!

#1: Big Ben

#2: Ace Stevens

#3: Jaeger van Dorn

#4: Bodybag Jones

#5: Wildfire Johnny Rage

#6: Eric Darkstrom

#7: Nook the Secret Weapon

#8: Derek Craven

#9: El Diablo Sanchez

#10: Tygar Singh

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Box 5275
Willowick, Ohio 44095

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WEAR-DOWN HOLDS

1. AIRPLANE SPIN
2. ARMBAR
3. ARMDRAG
4. ARMLOCK
5. ARM STRETCH
6. ARM WHIP
7. ASIAN SPIKE
8. BEAR HUG
9. BITING
10. BODY SLAM
11. BODY TACKLE
12. CHICKEN WING
13. CHOKE
14. CLAW
15. CLOTHESLINE
16. CROSS BODY BLOCK
17. DOUBLE AXEHANDLE
18. DROP KICK
19. EAGLE SPLIT
20. ELBOW SMASH
21. EYE GOUGE
22. FACE RAKE
23. FIREMAN'S CARRY RAM
24. FLYING BODY PRESS
25. FLYING CLOTHESLINE
26. FLYING DROP KICK
27. FLYING ELBOW DROP
28. FLYING HEAD BUTT
29. FLYING MARE
30. FOREARM SMASH
31. FOREIGN OBJECT
32. FULL NELSON
33. GIANT SWING
34. GRAPEVINE
35. HAIR PULLING
36. HAMMERLOCK
37. HEAD LOCK
38. HEAD STOMP
39. HEART PUNCH
40. HIP ROLL
41. IRISH WHIP
42. KNEE DROP
43. LEGLOCK
44. MANAGER INTERFERENCE
45. MONKEY FLIP
46. OVERHEAD TOSS
47. POLE RAM
48. REVERSE CHINLOCK
49. ROLLING SCISSORS
50. ROPE BURN
51. SAVATE KICK
52. SCISSORS GRIP
53. SHOULDER BREAKER
54. SLINGSHOT
55. SNAP MARE
56. STEP-OVER TOE HOLD
57. SUPLEX
58. SURFBOARD
59. TURNBUCKLE SMASH
60. WRISTLOCK

SET-UP HOLDS

61. ABDOMINAL STRETCH
62. ATOMIC DROP
63. AVALANCHE
64. BACKBREAKER
65. BACKROLL PRESS
66. BELLY TO BELLY
67. BIG SPLASH
68. BOSTON CRAB
69. BRAIN BUSTER
70. BULLDOG
71. CAMEL CLUTCH
72. COBRA CLUTCH
73. CRADLE
74. CRUCIFIX
75. DDT
76. FIGURE FOUR
77. FLYING LEG DROP
78. GOURD BUSTER
79. INDIAN DEATH LOCK
80. NECKBREAKER
81. PILEDRIVER
82. POWER BOMB
83. POWER SLAM
84. RUSSIAN SICKLE
85. SLEEPER
86. SLINGSHOT SUPLEX
87. SMALL PACKAGE
88. SPINE BUSTER
89. SUNSET FLIP
90. SUPERPLEX

NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP

WRESTLER'S NAME (NO ACTUAL PRO WRESTLER NAMES, PLEASE)

WRESTLER'S HEIGHT WRESTLER'S WEIGHT

SPECIAL GIMMICK OR DESCRIPTION OF WRESTLER

MANAGER'S NAME (IF NOT YOU)

Wear-Down Holds: Choose 10 from the list of 60 shown at left. List them in the order to be used. Use each hold only once

1_____ 2_____ 3_____ 4_____ 5_____

6_____ 7_____ 8_____ 9_____ 10_____

Set-Up Holds: Choose 5 from the list of 30 shown at right. List them in the order to be used. Use each hold only once

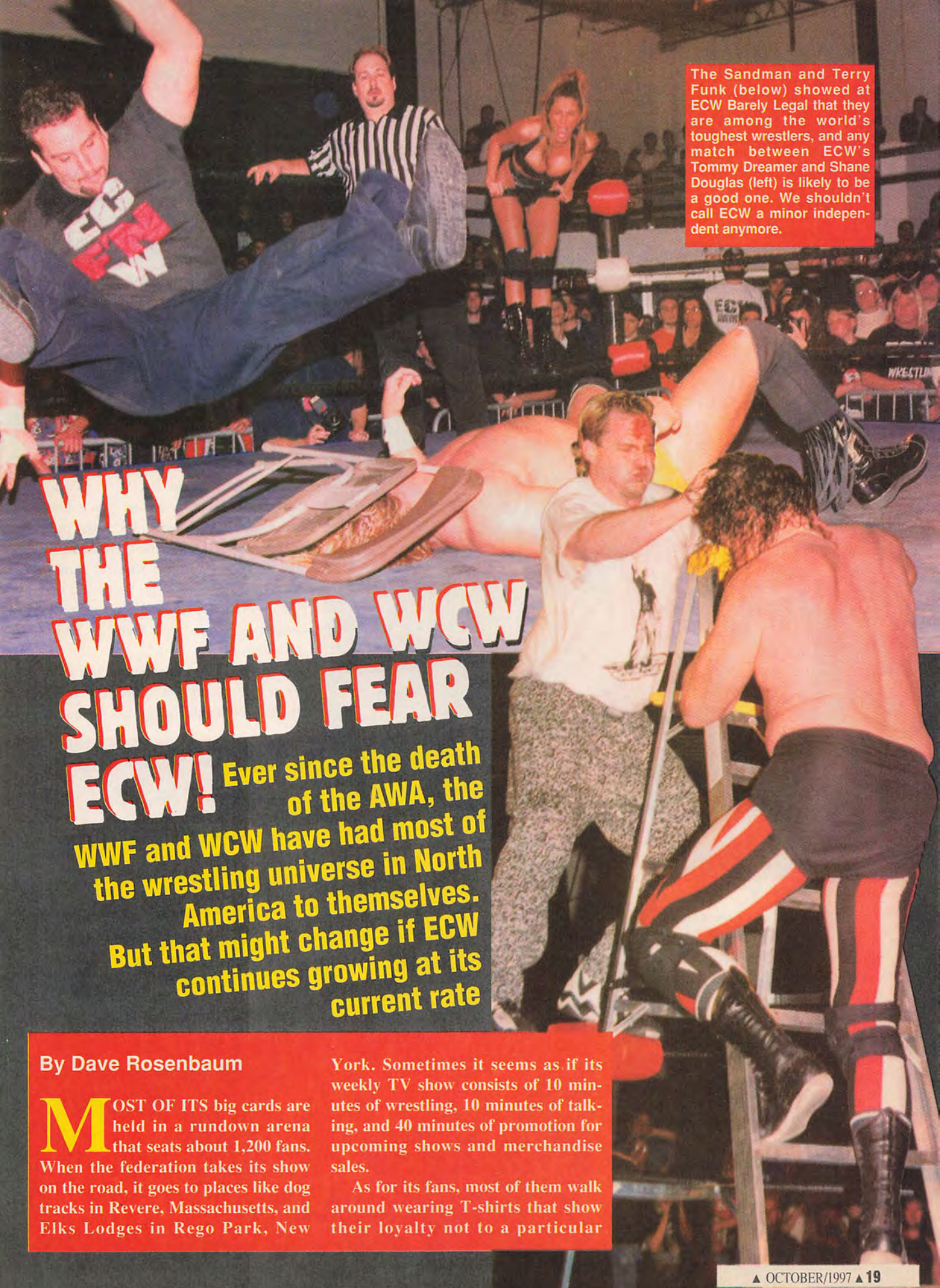
1_____ 2_____ 3_____ 4_____ 5_____

Finishing Hold: Create your custom final maneuver or choose a hold from the 90 shown. Limit the length to 20 letters and spaces

FINISHING HOLD

Opponents: Check the numbers of the men you want your wrestler to go against from the 10 at the top. Remember to enclose $1.00 for each.

1__ 2__ 3__ 4__ 5__ 6__ 7__ 8__ 9__ 10__



The Sandman and Terry Funk (below) showed at ECW Barely Legal that they are among the world's toughest wrestlers, and any match between ECW's Tommy Dreamer and Shane Douglas (left) is likely to be a good one. We shouldn't call ECW a minor independent anymore.

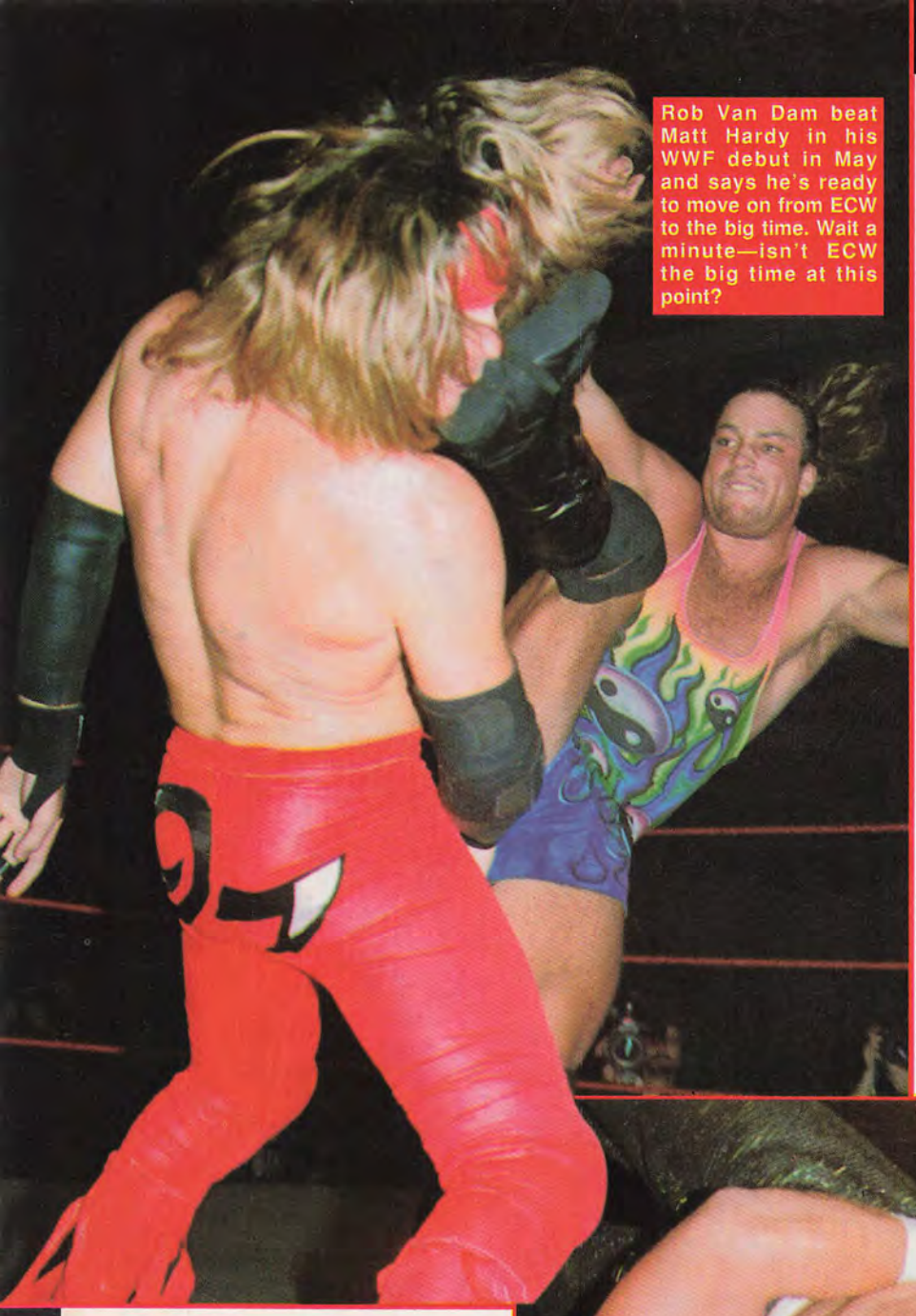
WHY THE WWF AND WCW SHOULD FEAR ECW!

Ever since the death of the AWA, the WWF and WCW have had most of the wrestling universe in North America to themselves. But that might change if ECW continues growing at its current rate

By Dave Rosenbaum

MOST OF ITS big cards are held in a rundown arena that seats about 1,200 fans. When the federation takes its show on the road, it goes to places like dog tracks in Revere, Massachusetts, and Elks Lodges in Rego Park, New York. Sometimes it seems as if its weekly TV show consists of 10 minutes of wrestling, 10 minutes of talking, and 40 minutes of promotion for upcoming shows and merchandise sales.

As for its fans, most of them walk around wearing T-shirts that show their loyalty not to a particular



Rob Van Dam beat Matt Hardy in his WWF debut in May and says he's ready to move on from ECW to the big time. Wait a minute—isn't ECW the big time at this point?

wrestler, but to the promotion itself.

It's the kind of federation that appeals to wrestling fans with a taste for extreme violence and blood. Violence for the sake of violence, some say. Big names like Raven, Stevie Richards, The Sandman, Tommy Dreamer, and Louie Spicolli. Who are those guys? Its heavyweight champion is Terry Funk, who has retired several times over the past 10 years.

Some kind of threat, that ECW. A minor independent federation that will remain minor and independent. Bargain basement wrestling. Certainly no menace to the WWF and WCW.

Wrong!

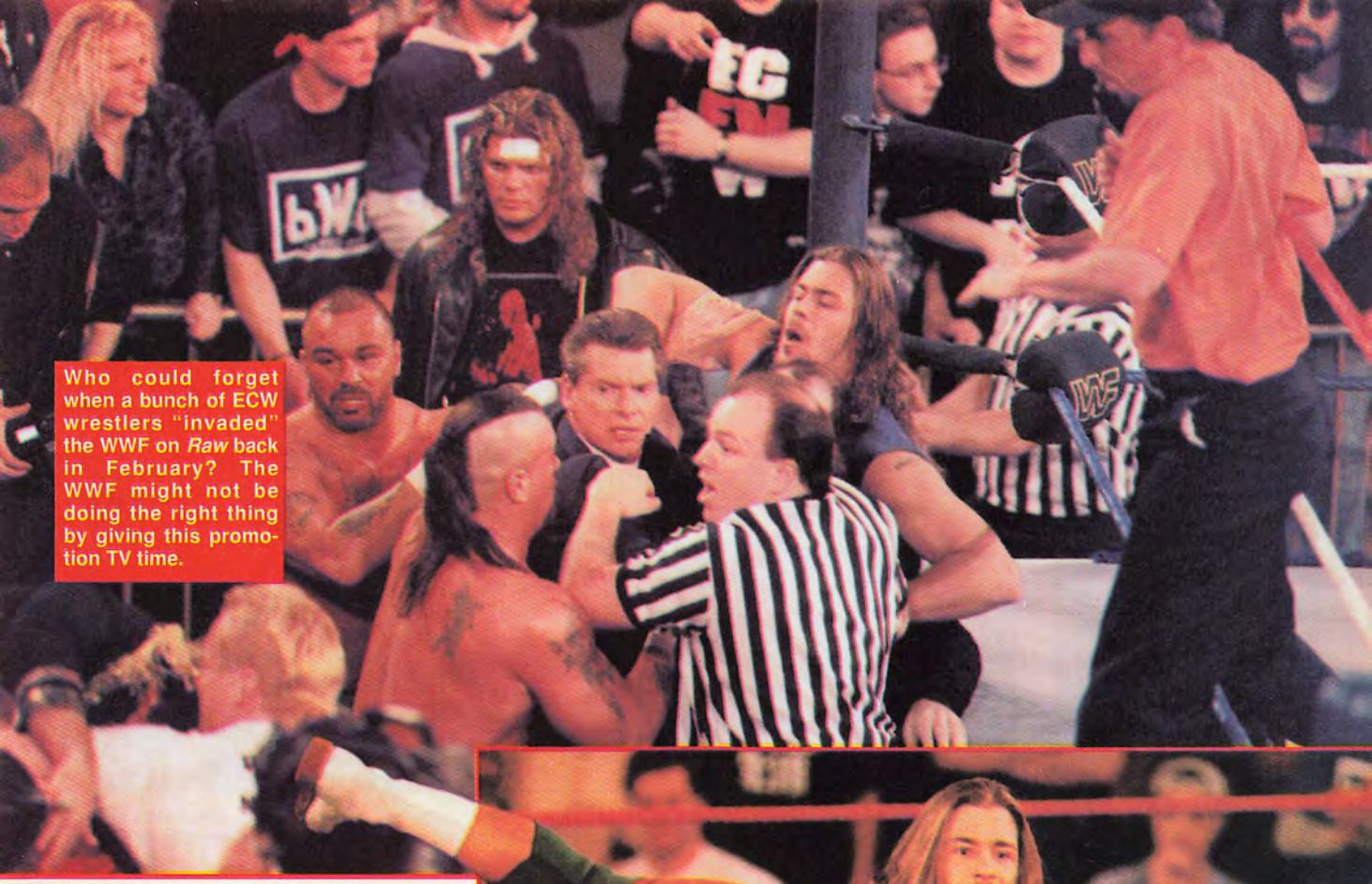
In recent months, the WWF has included ECW wrestlers on *Raw Is War* for the purpose of boosting its ratings in its war with WCW's *Nitro*.

ECW's first pay-per-view venture, Barely Legal, attracted approximately 44,000 buys, bringing the promotion $352,716 in revenue. The second pay-per-view, scheduled for August 17, will be distributed by Viewer's Choice in addition to Request, boosting the PPV universe from about 17 million to about 28 million, and possibly doubling ECW's take.

Add it all up. ECW is getting known on national cable-TV. Thanks to PPV, the federation is building a war chest. In Philadelphia, front row tickets to cards at ECW Arena are bringing big bucks on the black market. Even Jerry Lawler, the most public enemy of ECW, introduced ECW star Rob Van Dam on a recent *Raw Is War*. Lawler loves to go on the air and criticize ECW, but isn't he actually doing the promotion a favor by giving it publicity?

The federation is growing and gaining respect. And that's why the WWF and WCW would be foolish to ignore

Taz and Sabu are both world-class athletes, and they both got good national exposure when they wrestled each other at Barely Legal.



Who could forget when a bunch of ECW wrestlers "invaded" the WWF on *Raw* back in February? The WWF might not be doing the right thing by giving this promotion TV time.

the threat from ECW. Is a third major federation sprouting before our eyes?

"Our intention was never to compete with the WWF or WCW, but to provide an alternative to fans who were sick and tired of the mainstream," said ECW President Tod Gordon. "We've discovered, much to our pleasure, that a growing number of fans want something different, something a little more exciting. It thrills us when the WWF or WCW try to copy us. But we're always one step ahead. People are finding out that we're the real deal."

Terry Funk called ECW "a throwback to the way wrestling was and the way it still should be."

"I don't know what happened," he said. "The big federations let their marketing departments take over and forgot about wrestling. This place has given me new life."

It's understandable that WWF and WCW officials continue to view ECW as minor league. One WWF executive said ECW "provides us with a great opportunity to look at new talent. It's a great source of prospects." The WWF has filled 90,000-seat stadiums and *WCW Monday Nitro* has received cable TV ratings previously thought unattainable by a wrestling federation. Ask a thousand men on the streets to name a professional wrestler and it's doubtful anyone will come up with a single ECW wrestler ... unless you conduct the poll near ECW Arena.

Indeed, major federations have

(Continued on page 56)

Thousands watched Stevie Richards beat Little Guido on *Raw* in February, and Stevie's BWO has become very popular with fans. ECW only figures to get stronger in the coming months.

press conference...

Sonny Ono presents Ultimo Dragon with the WCW TV belt after one of his last title defenses. Dragon says too much has been made of a squabble he had with Ono and insists that relationship is strong.

Ultimo Dragon

IN SIZE, HE'S a lightweight. Ultimo Dragon stands only 5'7" and weighs a mere 175 pounds. But as wrestlers go, he is becoming a heavyweight. A former holder of the WCW TV and cruiserweight titles, as well as the eight belts in Japan known collectively as the J-Crown, Dragon is considered by many to be the best wrestler, pound-for-pound, in the world.

If there is anything that can be said negatively about Dragon, it's that his manager, Sonny Ono, plays too large a role in his matches. Ono, himself a martial arts expert, has trained Dragon brilliantly, but he gets a bit too excited during the action and can't resist the temptation to involve himself physically. That involvement backfired at Slamboree '97 on May 18 when Dragon was defending the TV title against Lord Steven Regal. Ono attempted to kick Regal but connected with Dragon instead. Dragon was momentarily stunned and could not escape Regal's followup pin attempt and lost the title.

On an earlier card, Dragon and Ono argued after a match against Villano IV and walked back to the dressing room separately.

We sent Senior Editor Bill Apter, Editor-in-Chief Dave Lenker, and Senior Writer Dave Rosenbaum to Atlanta to talk with Dragon. Sitting over lunch at a cafe in the CNN Center, they discussed everything from Japanese wrestling to Japanese food. This wasn't exactly your ordinary interview.

DAVE ROSENBAUM: Are you still talking to Sonny Ono?

ULTIMO DRAGON: Of course. We had a problem at Slamboree and it cost us. But we've spoken about it, and I don't think you'll see that kind of thing happen again.

DAVE LENKER: Who did most of the talking?

DRAGON: We talked. That means we both had our say.

LENKER: This wouldn't be the first time you two spoke about this particular issue.

"Sonny Ono is a superb manager and trainer who will guide Ultimo Dragon to many championships. If Ultimo Dragon is going to lose any more titles, it will be because of his own failures."

DRAGON: Are you asking me a question or making a statement?

BILL APTER: I think Dave is making an assumption based on the fact that you two had been arguing a bit even leading up to Slamboree.

DRAGON: Are *you* asking a question?

ROSENBAUM: Allow me. Is Sonny Ono done interfering in your matches?

DRAGON: Thank you. The answer is this: Sonny Ono is an outstanding manager and trainer who will guide Ultimo Dragon to many championships. If Ultimo Dragon is going to lose any more titles, it will be because of his own failures.

APTER: Let's move on to another subject. From what we have heard, Sonny Ono would like to bring Keiji Muto over from Japan to join his stable and, if he's successful, he'd like to team you with Muto. How do you feel about that?

DRAGON: How do I feel? What do you mean by how do I feel?

ROSENBAUM: It's a lazy reporter's question, Ultimo. It's his way of asking a question without asking a question. What he means is, do you want to team with Muto, or do you not care?

DRAGON: Teaming with Muto would be fine. He is a great wrestler, and it would be good to team with a man that the NWO wanted but could not get. If Sonny Ono wants me to team with Muto, I will.

APTER: Have you argued over Muto?

DRAGON: ***(shaking head)*** **Back to that. Why should we argue over Muto? We don't even have Muto. Like I said, if Sonny Ono wants to get Muto, fine. I will team with him, whatever Sonny wants. If not, I will go on fine. There is nobody I need.**

ROSENBAUM: But there's a money factor here. There's the possibility that Muto will get more money than you are getting ...

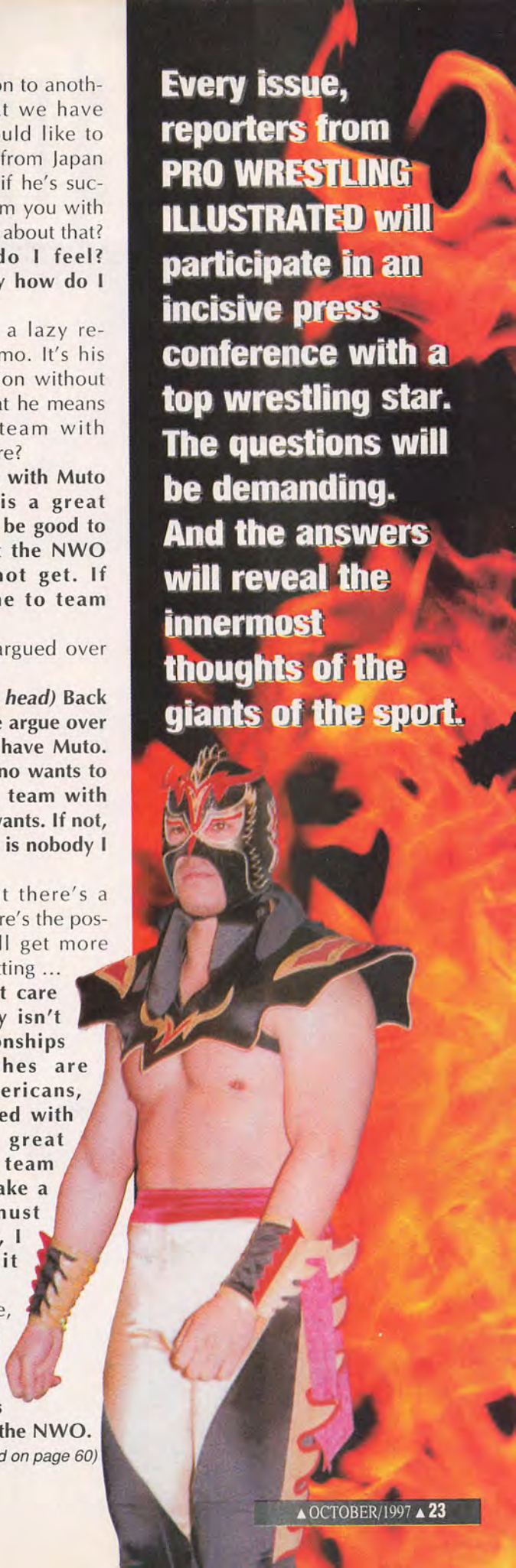
DRAGON: I do not care about money. Money isn't everything. Championships and winning matches are everything. You Americans, you are too concerned with money. Muto is a great wrestler. If I am to team with him, we will make a great team. If I must wrestle against him, I will beat him, but it would not be easy.

LENKER: Of course, teaming with Muto would make you a target of the NWO.

DRAGON: That's fine. I am not afraid of the NWO.

(Continued on page 60)

Every issue, reporters from PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED will participate in an incisive press conference with a top wrestling star. The questions will be demanding. And the answers will reveal the innermost thoughts of the giants of the sport.

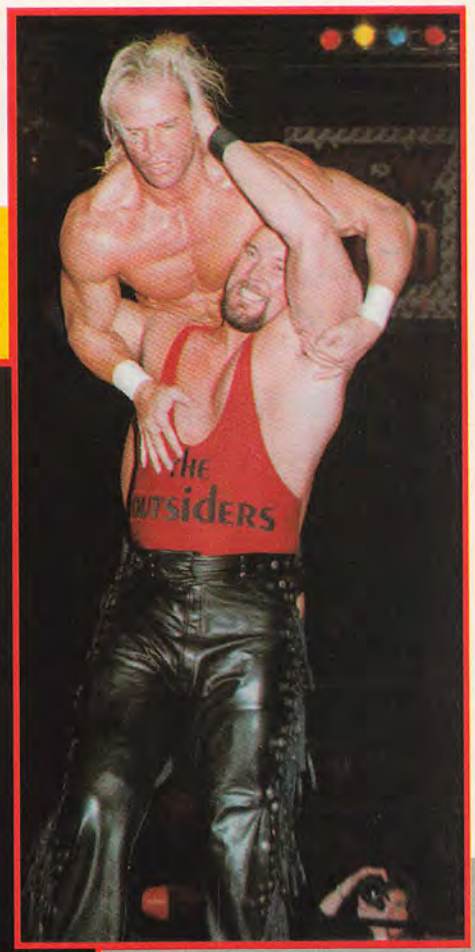


SINGLED OUT WITH

Try It ... It's Twice The Fun!

Since invading WCW, Kevin Nash and Scott Hall have been an inseparable duo. But when Hall took time off, Nash discovered that battling the NWO's enemies on his own could be just as rewarding as competing alongside his loyal partner

KEVIN NASH!



Lifting Lex Luger over his head and slamming him (right), Nash loves doing that. And choking him with that big left boot of his (below), well, Nash enjoys that, too. He could get used to wrestling on his own again. He loves it.

By Andy Rodriguez

KEVIN NASH STEPPED over the top rope and took a deep breath. He looked around the ring, first at his opponent, then at the crowd. He smiled broadly. On his face grew a look that appeared to say, "This is good, *really* good!"

Welcome back to singles competition, Kevin Nash.

"Tonight I was really back in my element," Nash said. "I felt like I belonged in there alone. I don't need the other boys to back me up!"

Well, Nash may or may not have proven that, but he has shown that he can be very effective without the aid of others in the NWO. In the process, he proved to himself that he can enjoy his time in the ring even when he's not at the side of his good friend and partner Scott Hall.

Considering what a solid partnership they have formed, that is quite an accomplishment. However, Nash said he isn't nearly ready to abandon his fellow Outsider.

"The NWO is strong, baby!" he asserted. "I'm just branching out into another field of endeavor, you might say. There's no way I'm going to stop teaming with Scottie. We're the ones who started it all. We *are* the NWO!"

They certainly are, along with Hulk Hogan, Randy Savage, and Syxx. Those men—and their comrades—have represented the NWO brilliantly as singles competitors. Nash says he saw his role in the group differently.

"Since we started this thing, I always believed the best thing I could do for us was tag with Scott," said Nash. "For the good of the group, that's how I saw it. Sure, at times I thought about going out

there on my own, but I never saw the reason."

Before Nash figured out a reason, he received an opportunity, when Hall took a one-month sabbatical to deal with personal matters. Just as suddenly, Nash was left without a partner.

"Yeah, he could have tagged with Hogan or Syxx or Bagwell," said Ted DiBiase, "but he didn't do it for two reasons. First, he didn't want to distract those guys from their other goals, and more importantly, he just wouldn't have felt right tagging with anybody else. He and Scott are natural partners."

The choice, said Nash, was to wrestle singles or sit down.

"I love escorting my guys to the ring," he said, "and I feel I have a lot to contribute from the sidelines. But above all, I'm a wrestler. I need to compete. I decided that I had to get back to the ring, partner or not. I was ready to take that chance."

It was a big chance, as Nash's most frequent opponent while Hall was out was "Diamond" Dallas Page, one of the NWO's toughest nemeses. For Nash, the bouts against Page were a supreme test. Page has improved dramatically over the past several years. And, of course, he's fueled by his desire to defend WCW against the mighty Outsider threat.

But although Nash suddenly had to adjust his style, he was well-prepared for the challenge. In the WWF, he enjoyed lengthy reigns as both World and Intercontinental champion, so he definitely has the goods. His biggest concern was a sort of ring rust.

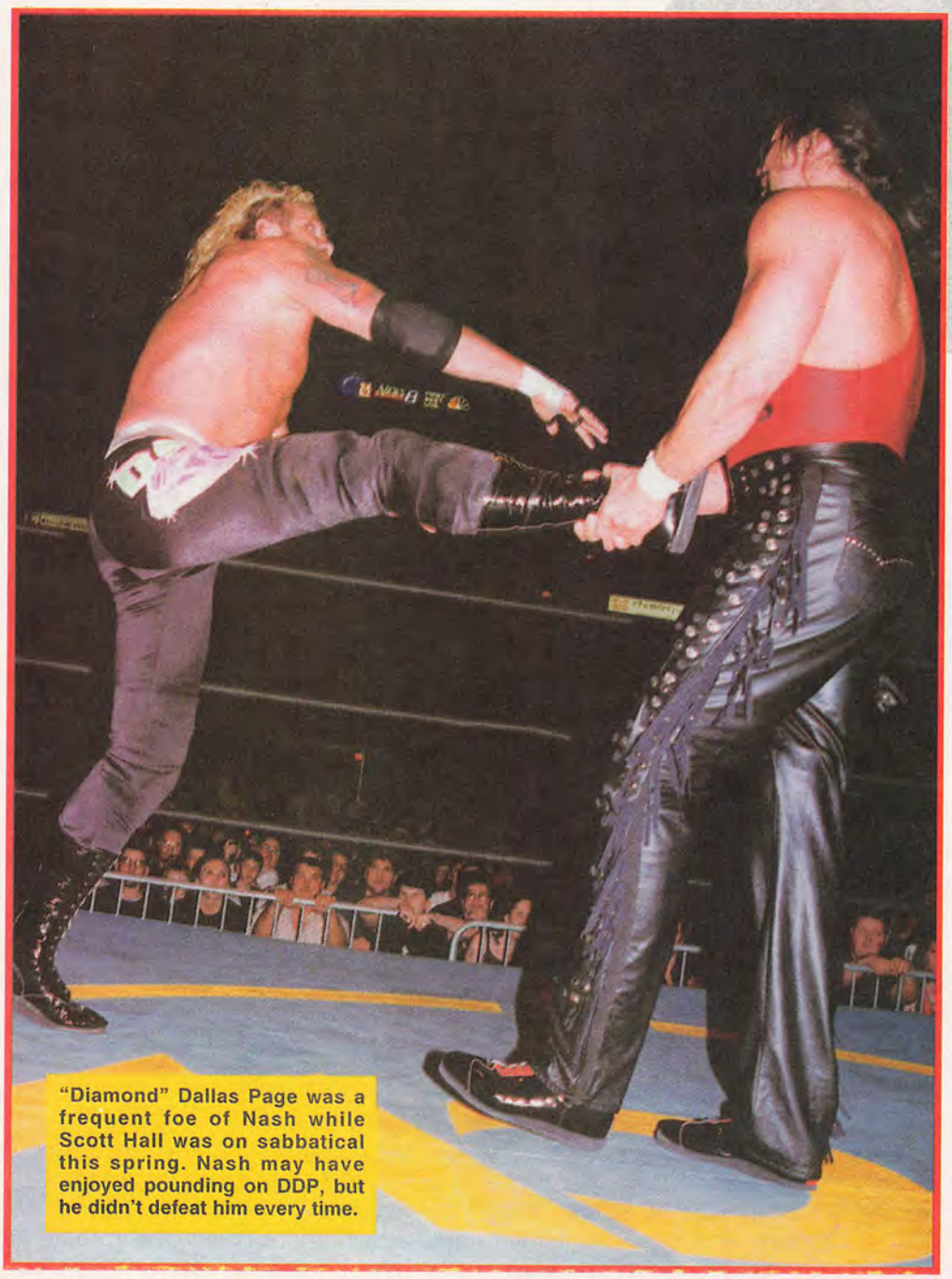
"I was getting used to tagging off to Scottie when I wanted a break," he said. "This time there'd be nobody there, nobody except that punk Page.

"But I got used to it," he added. "You better believe I did! It was great. I got to beat Page up all by myself. I didn't have to share in all the fun."

It was an even series; neither man really can claim that he won convincingly. But Nash says that as a singles wrestler, he has found great satisfaction, satisfaction that doesn't stem from tag team victories.

"I've been having a ball in there!" he exclaimed. "Yeah, it's been a little rough. Page is decent, and so are a lot of these other people. But now I get to beat up a guy all the time, instead of half the time. It feels great! I forgot wrestling singles could be this much fun!"

Nash says he had so much fun that he wants to keep wrestling singles, even when he and Hall are as a team back at full strength.



"Diamond" Dallas Page was a frequent foe of Nash while Scott Hall was on sabbatical this spring. Nash may have enjoyed pounding on DDP, but he didn't defeat him every time.

Everyone knows about the singles success Nash had during his stint in the WWF, but at times he has been just as dominant in WCW as he was when he was Diesel. Here he manhandles Bunkhouse Buck.

when I was away. We'll keep proving it together."

Page admits that the "new" Nash is more of a danger than ever.

"Yeah, the man can flat-out wrestle," he said. "I'm not going to deny that. But before he starts thinking this is all a big party, he better realize that for people like me and Lex Luger, this isn't fun at all. It's deadly serious. I can assure you, what we'll do to wipe that smirk off his face won't be *fun* for him at all, although we just might get a laugh or two!"

"Do you think I care what Page thinks?" Nash responded. "Do you think I care what Luger thinks, or Sting? If they can't appreciate my humor, to hell with them! They'll say anything to try stopping the NWO juggernaut, but nothing they say will work! I get a thrill out of beating up Page. I'll beat up anybody in WCW!"

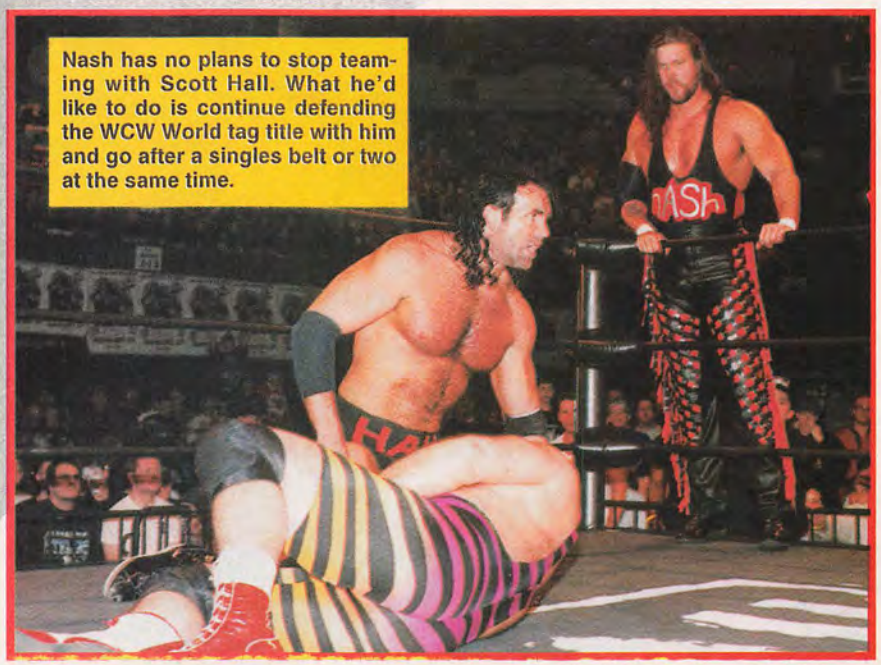
Fun, fun, fun, NWO-style.

Pretty sad, isn't it?

"There's nothing more important to me than what Scottie and I have going," he said, "but I don't see any reason why I should stop wrestling singles! Hell, I could go after any singles title that isn't held by a member of the NWO, and with the way WCW is gunning for us, I'm sure I'd have my chances. Me as World champion someday. Scottie as U.S. champ. Yeah, I like that! I told Scottie to do it more. Try it ... it's twice the fun!"

And what does Hall think of his partner's new adventure?

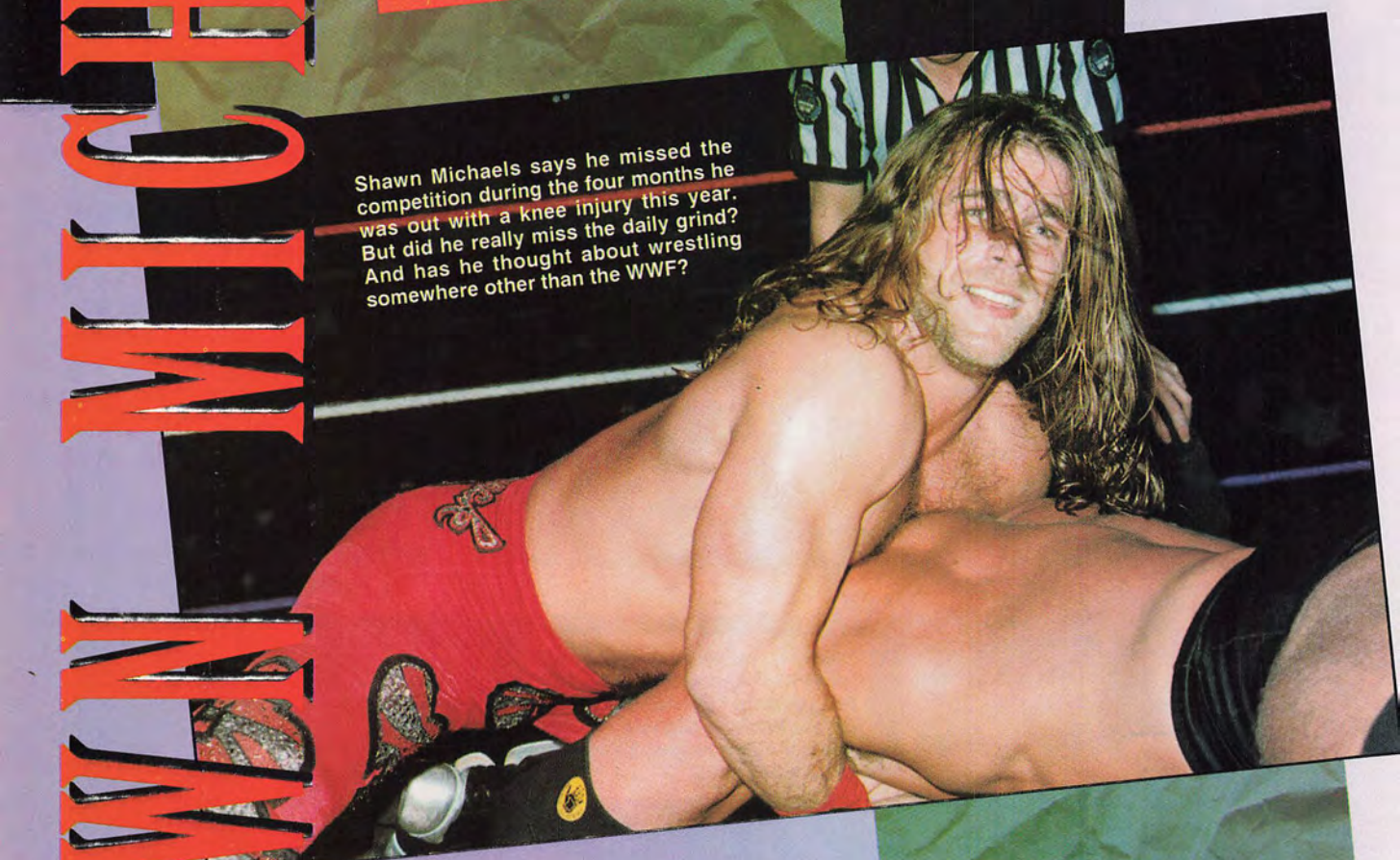
"Hey, it's cool with me," he said. "Whatever makes Kev happy makes me happy. And when we're happy, that worse news still for WCW. Kevin is a champion no matter what he does. He proved it



Nash has no plans to stop teaming with Scott Hall. What he'd like to do is continue defending the WCW World tag title with him and go after a singles belt or two at the same time.

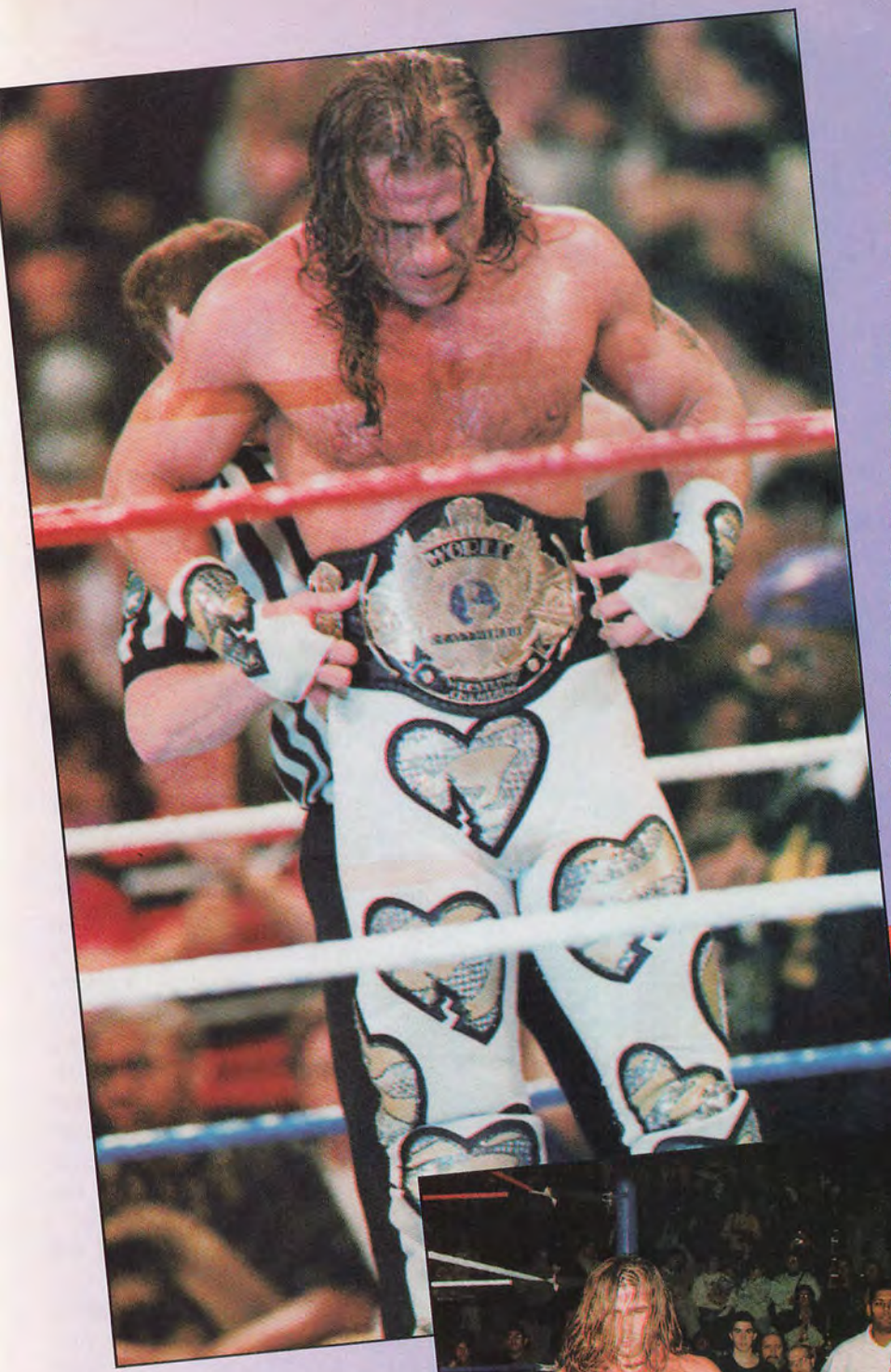
SHAWN MICHAELS

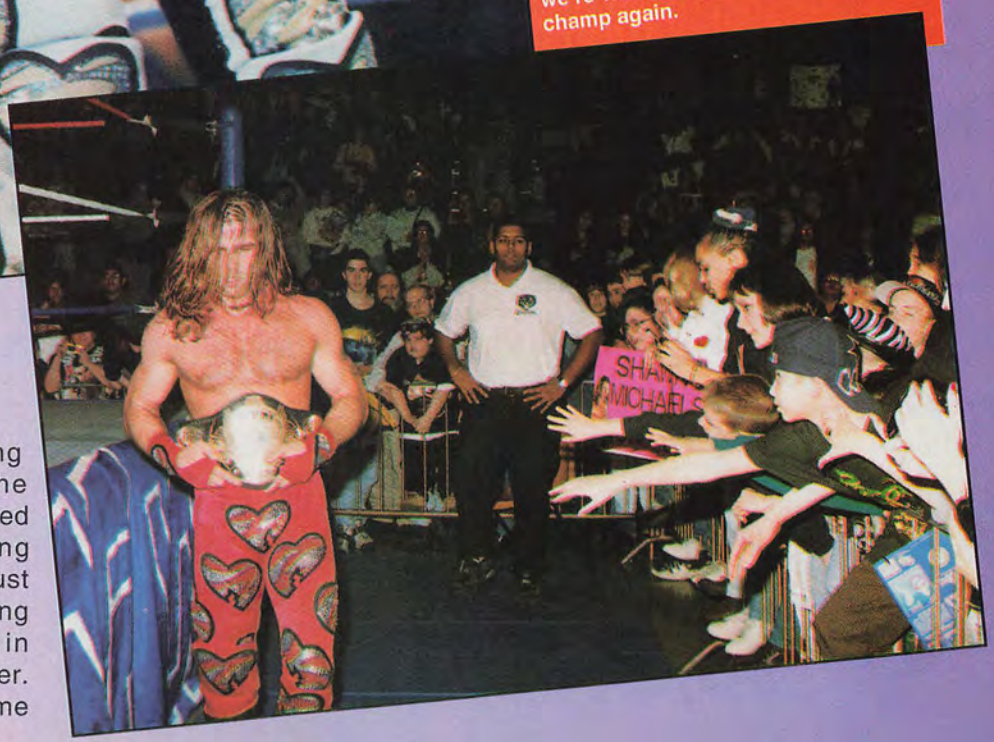
Is His Heart Still In The WWF?



Shawn Michaels says he missed the competition during the four months he was out with a knee injury this year. But did he really miss the daily grind? And has he thought about wrestling somewhere other than the WWF?

His old buddies are ruling the roost in the New World Order. He's not getting shots at the WWF World title. "The Heartbreak Kid" might be bored, distracted, and planning his next move





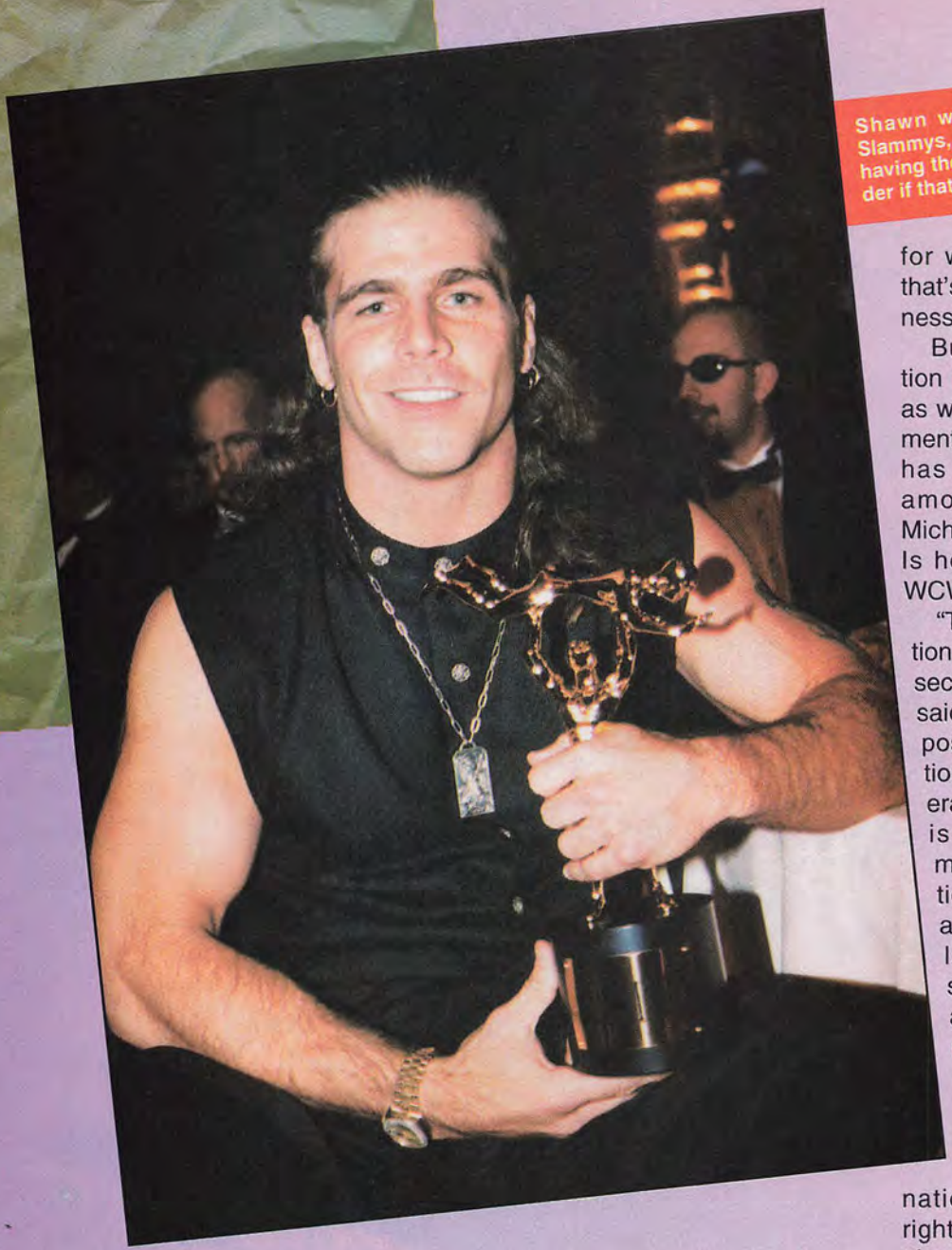
Michaels was overwhelmed with joy when he won the WWF World title at WrestleMania XII (left), but just days before he vacated the title this February, he looked totally exhausted (below). Despite what he says, we're not sure he wants to be WWF champ again.

By Dave Rosenbaum

KEVIN NASH WAS feeling comfortable with the reporters who had gathered around him. They were sitting around after a pay-per-view just shooting the breeze and talking about recent developments in WCW and the New World Order. Normal stuff, and the talk came around to a popular subject: Which wrestlers would be perfect candidates for the NWO? It's a subject Nash doesn't mind talking about, as long as the conversation is off the record, and after suggesting five or six names, Nash turned serious.

"You can write this if you want, I don't care," Nash said. "But there's one guy, and I'm not going to mention who he is, who I can't believe hasn't approached *us* about joining the NWO. I mean, I would've thought this guy would've been on the phone the minute he saw what we were doing, but I haven't heard a word from him. You might know who I'm talking about, you might not, but this one guy would be perfect for the NWO. He has the attitude."

Could Nash have been talking about his old friend, employer, and tag team partner, Shawn Michaels? The man whose body he guarded for months before he



Shawn was very happy at this year's Slammys, when he took home an award for having the best Match of the Year. We wonder if that smile will disappear again soon.

moved out on his own and became WWF World champion? The man who pinned Nash, then known as Diesel, in a no-holds-barred match at In Your House VII shortly before Nash left the WWF for WCW (and the NWO)?

They were enemies then, but now? Flashback: WrestleMania XIII in March. Michaels, who a month earlier had vacated the WWF World title because of a knee injury, walks down the aisle toward the broadcast table, looks into the TV camera, and flashes the "NWO 4 Life" hand signal.

The next night at *Nitro*, Nash heads down the aisle, looks into the camera, and says, "Right back at you, HBK!"

HBK? Heartbreak Kid, of course. Michaels' nickname. Michaels and Nash were communicating with each other, right?

"I really don't know what you're talking about," Michaels said. "The only wrestling I watch is the WWF. He did that? HBK? Maybe it was someone else."

Nash also denied that he was communicating with Michaels.

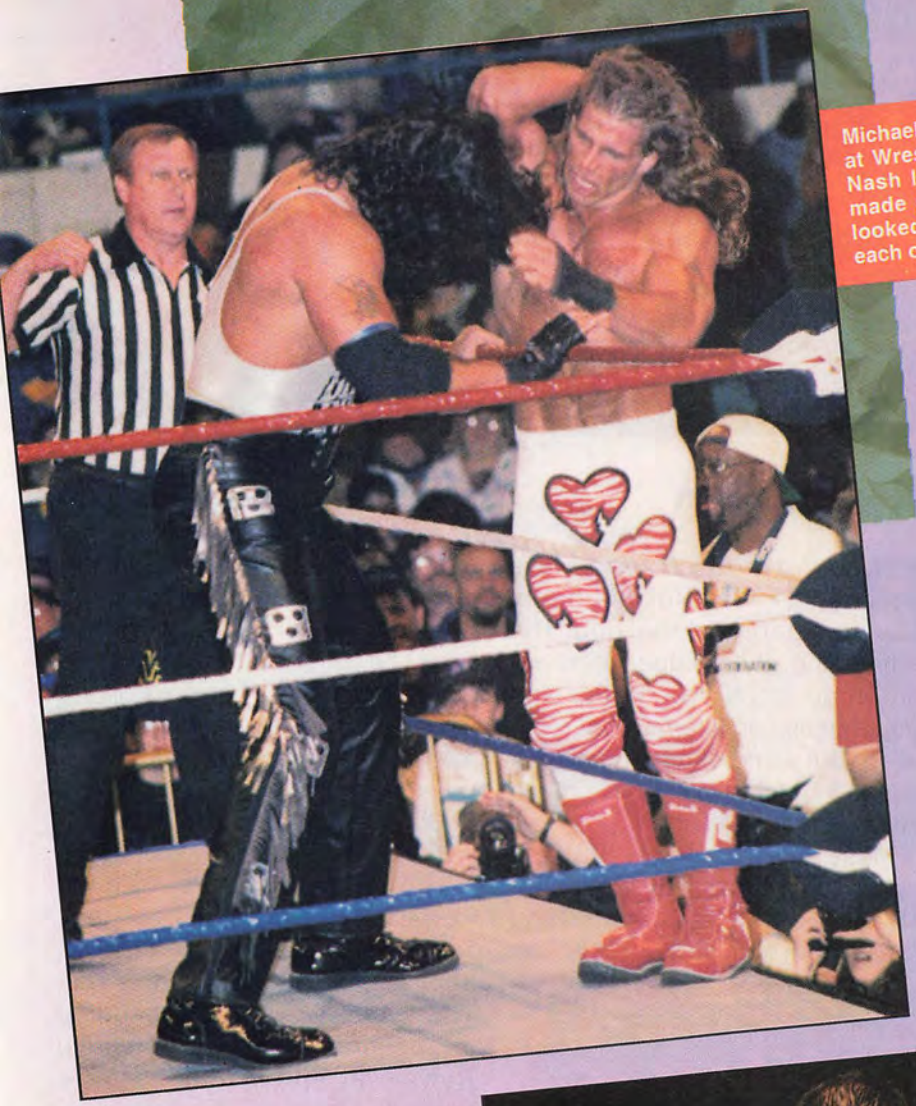
"Anyone who wants to communicate with me," Nash said, "they know where they can find me. As for what I said or what I mean, that's personal. None of your business."

But the apparent communication between Nash and Michaels, as well as Nash's off-the-cuff comments, added fuel to a debate that has been going on for months among wrestling insiders: Is Michaels' heart still in the WWF? Is he thinking about jumping to WCW and the NWO?

"The answer to your first question is yes and the answer to your second question is no," Michaels said, refusing to discuss further a possible jump to a rival federation. "I love the WWF. This federation means a lot to me. This is where I made a name for myself, and I have every intention of being loyal to my fans and regaining the World title. A lot of people say I've made some mistakes over the years, and they're right, but I have no regrets. I've been Intercontinental champion, WWF tag team champion, and WWF champion. I've been on the cover of *Playgirl* and all over national TV. Everything's gone right for me in the WWF. It's my place.

"Besides," Michaels said, "I still have Bret Hart to deal with."

That might be true, but there's more to wrestling than just wrestling. Nash and Scott Hall, Michaels' former friends in the WWF, are now in WCW and making a major impact as leaders of the NWO. So many former WWF stars are in the NWO, including Hulk Hogan, Ted DiBiase, Randy Savage, and Syxx (the former 1-2-3 Kid). Life on the road can get lonely when you don't have any of your close friends along with you, and Michaels has shown signs of cracking. He embarked on an



Michaels had a great match with Kevin Nash at WrestleMania XI, and they feuded before Nash left for WCW, but rumor has it they made peace before Nash departed. It sure looked like they were communicating with each other on TV recently.

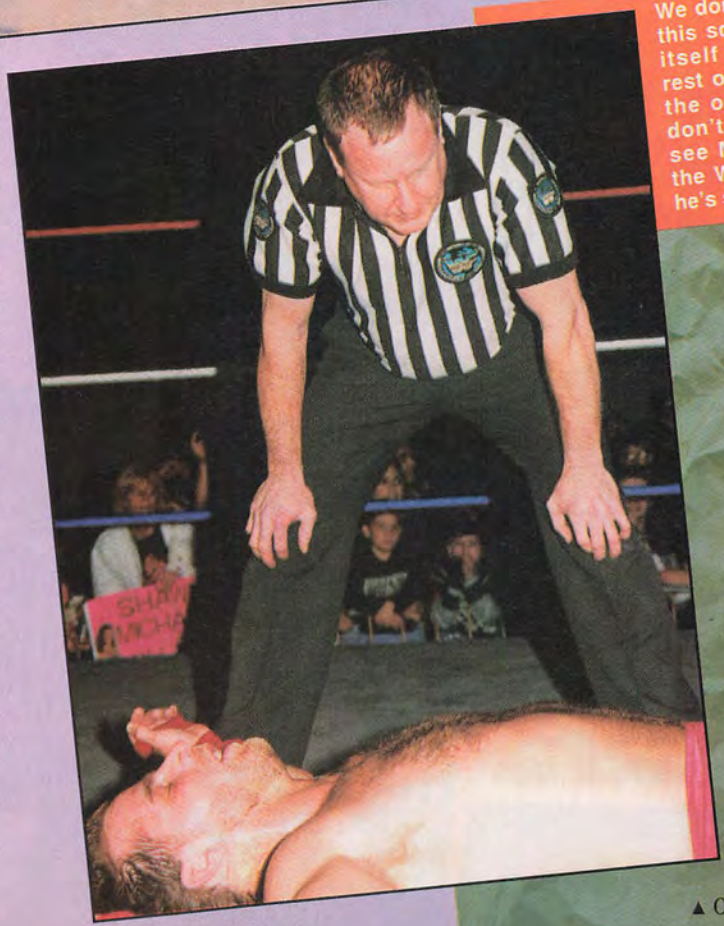
The NWO might not be the right place for Michaels because Hogan, the NWO leader, is WCW World champion. In other words, the top spot in the federation would be off-limits to Michaels, at least for the foreseeable future. But the top spot in the WWF is held by World champion The Undertaker, a fan favorite like Michaels. Here's a situation where the grass isn't greener on the other side of the fence; it's just as brown.

But sometimes change is good. It's a way to break out of a funk, stop bad patterns from repeating themselves. If Michaels really is considering a move, could we blame him? □

overambitious defense schedule as World champion and tended to get angry over the simplest things. Plus he always looked so tired.

"One night his music got messed up," said a WWF insider. "I don't know exactly what happened, but it didn't go off the way it was supposed to. Man, was Shawn mad. I'd never seen him that way. I remember thinking, *What's wrong with him? Why is he acting this way?"*

Michaels acknowledged that many of his former friends are in WCW and added: "They made some decisions that I chose not to make. Remember, much of what Diesel [Nash] is is because of me. But he made some decisions and went off on his own. Besides, you know me. I've always been a leader, not a follower."



We don't want to see this scene repeating itself too often the rest of this year. On the other hand, we don't really want to see Michaels leave the WWF. He insists he's staying.

VADER'S OUT... AND THE

Like most corporate entities, the WWF tries to avoid scandal at all costs. But when Big Van Vader caused an international incident in April, federation officials were more than willing to talk about it. Almost *too* willing

By Harry Burkett

BIG VAN VADER has always been known for his nasty demeanor in the ring. His pulverizing style helped him win him three WCW World titles and garnered him an international reputation. But some of his actions *outside* the squared circle have made him a controversial figure.

Most fans remember Vader's locker room brawl with Paul Orndorff at Atlanta's Center Stage Theater on August 29, 1995. The altercation eventually led to Vader's dismissal from WCW.

While this incident would be considered a setback in many wrestlers' careers, it turned out to be to be just another chapter in Vader lore. A fresh beginning in the WWF seemed to only bring out more of the big man's anger and violent tendencies.

But at least the action remained in the ring. That is, until recently.

During the WWF's tour of Kuwait, Vader was one of many wrestlers who made promotional appearances. Vader, along with The Undertaker, was scheduled to appear live on *Good Morning Kuwait* on April 11. Bassam Al Othman, host of the program, asked Vader on the air if wrestling was real. Instead of answering his question, Vader pulled him out of his seat by his necktie and cursed at him. Then Vader shoved Al Othman and knocked over a table.

The fact that Vader did what he did on that talk show in Kuwait (above) should have come as no huge surprise to the WWF. He has always been out of control. Even his former manager Jim Cornette had trouble keeping him in line (right).

OF CONTROL

WWF LOVES IT!

Not only does Vader enjoy beating up men like Shawn Michaels (left) and Bret Hart (below), he likes taunting them while he does it. What happened in Kuwait has only enhanced his reputation as a bully.

Since Kuwaiti courts were not in session due to the Muslim holy time of Ramadan, Vader wasn't able to attend a hearing until April 23. He thus missed scheduled bouts at In Your House on April 20 and *Raw* on April 21.

At the hearing, Vader agreed to abide by the verdict of the Kuwaiti Court of Misdemeanors, which scheduled a trial for two weeks

Although Al Othman was not seriously injured, he immediately walked off the set and contacted police. Vader was charged with public humiliation and aggression and placed him under house arrest at his hotel. The fact that Vader, as a guest in the country, had touched a native Kuwaiti in an abusive manner made the matter an incident with serious diplomatic implications.

We found out just how brutal and sadistic Vader can be in April 1993, when he power-bombed Cactus Jack (a.k.a. Mankind) on a concrete floor during a match in WCW. He never expressed any remorse over that.

later. Vader then caught a flight to London.

Back in the United States, Vince McMahon was overwhelmed with questions regarding the matter. Several major newspapers quoted him as saying he regretted Vader's actions and that the incident may have resulted from communication problems. Some reports revealed that the show's American producer had told Vader (without informing Al Othman) to "ham it up" during the segment, although it isn't clear how far he was supposed to go.

In a press release sent to PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED and other media outlets, the WWF condemned Vader's offensive behavior. "The World Wrestling Federation wishes to apologize for the conduct of [Vader]," McMahon said. "His actions are in no way representative of the World Wrestling Federation. We apologize to the Kuwaiti people and the television station for this conduct."

Vader may have embarrassed himself and the WWF, but he will probably survive this brush with disaster.

Certainly, one would expect McMahon to downplay the event and try to lay the issue to rest. After all, similar events have been public relations nightmares for the WWF. During a February 1985 broadcast of ABC's *20/20*, correspondent John Stossel asked David Shultz if wrestling was fake. Shultz responded by repeatedly slapping Stossel's ears. The WWF ended up paying Stossel $280,000 in a settlement.

(Continued from page 58)

close-up:

THE GIANT

ONE OF THE most intimidating figures in wrestling history, The Giant checks in at 7'4" and 430 pounds … Debuted as a member of Kevin Sullivan's Dungeon of Doom in mid-1995 … Though he didn't wrestle during his first few months with WCW, he targeted WCW World champion Hulk Hogan from the outset and began a reign of terror over WCW wrestlers … Drove a truck over Hogan's prized Harley-Davidson motorcycle prior to Fall Brawl '95 in the parking lot of the Civic Center in Asheville, North Carolina. After the card, he clamped a vicious chokehold on Hogan and twisted the "Hulkster's" head like a corkscrew. The chokehold reminded many observers of the hold Andre the Giant used on Hogan in 1987 … The first match of his career was a World title bout against Hogan at Halloween Havoc on October 29, 1995, in Detroit … Hogan was on the verge of defeating The Giant after he body-slammed and legdropped him. But as Hogan went in for the pin, manager Jimmy Hart got up on the ring apron and hit referee Randy Anderson. The Giant was awarded the match by disqualification. As Hogan confronted Hart, The Giant attacked him, then helped Lex Luger put Hogan in his "torture rack" … Played a major role as Randy Savage won a 60-man over-the-top-rope battle royal for the WCW World title at World War III on November 26, 1995. Hogan had been mistakenly eliminated when The Giant pulled him out underneath the bottom rope. Protested Hogan: "The Giant pulled me under the bottom. I didn't go over the top!" … The protest caused friction between Hogan and Savage … Giant was furious when Zodiac, the former Brutus Beefcake, stopped him from doing further damage to Hogan after he choke-slammed Hogan on January 8, 1996 … Teamed with Ric Flair to defeat Hogan and Savage at Clash of the Champions XXXII in Las Vegas … Lost to Savage by disqualification on a subsequent *Monday Nitro* … Battled Hogan in a steel cage match at SuperBrawl VI on February 11, 1996 … Hogan fought off The Giant and climbed out of the cage for the victory at 15:04. Hogan got into a postmatch brawl with Sullivan and several Dungeon of Doom members, including The Giant … Afterward, Sullivan berated Giant for losing the match … Rumors circulated that The Giant was thinking about leaving the Dungeon and becoming a fan favorite … "There's no good inside The Giant," Sullivan insisted. "He's evil, and that's the way he'll always be!" … Pinned Sting numerous times … Landed a thunderous legdrop to pin Loch Ness in only 2:34 at Uncensored II on March 24 … Battled Flair, the WCW World champion, on the March 25 broadcast of *Nitro*. Giant was on the verge of beating Flair when Arn Anderson hit him with a chair. When The Giant turned around, he saw Sullivan—who had wrested the chair away from Anderson—holding the weapon. The Giant then choke-slammed both Sullivan and Arn, apparently causing his break from the Dungeon of Doom … "Let him go over to the other side," Sullivan warned. "The Giant will be just another Hogan lackey!" … The Giant and Flair battled Sting and Luger at the April 22 *Nitro*. Had Flair been pinned in the match, he would have lost the WCW World title. Sting and Luger won by DQ when Flair took a cup of coffee from Woman and threw it toward Sting and Luger. They ducked and the coffee hit The Giant in the eyes … Flair apologized, but The Giant was irate and demanded a title match against Flair, who reluctantly agreed … The Giant broke Flair's figure-four leglock and choke-slammed him for the pin later in the night, thus becoming the first rookie to win a world title … "You get in my way and you pay!" The Giant warned his challengers … Landed parts in the movies *Reggie's Prayer* and *Jingle All The Way* … Defeated Sting by pinfall at Slamboree '96 after manager Jimmy Hart and Lex Luger, who had been handcuffed together at ringside, interfered … Pinned Luger at the 1996 Great American Bash, overcoming Luger's "torture rack" and eventually choke-slamming him for the win … Meanwhile, Hogan, Kevin Nash, and Scott Hall were forming the New World Order, which would become the most powerful clique in WCW … Giant salivated over the prospect of choke-slamming NWO members … But it didn't happen that way: On August 10, 1996, in Sturgis, North Dakota, Hogan defeated Giant for the World title, becoming the first man ever to pin him … Hogan was in trouble when The Giant grabbed him by the throat, but then Hall entered the ring. The Giant choke-slammed Hall and Nash, but Hogan grabbed Jimmy Hart's megaphone and hit The Giant in the back of the head, then covered him for the win … The Giant was at the time considered one of the men who would lead WCW in its war with the NWO. But he surprised everyone by attacking the Dungeon of Doom on the September 2 *Nitro* and joining the NWO … Explained that money was his motivation. "Ted DiBiase told me that if I joined the NWO, I could own a house as nice as Hogan's," he said … Beat Jeff Jarrett by DQ at Halloween Havoc '96 … Earned a shot at Hogan by winning a three-ring, 60-man battle royal at World War III, last eliminating Luger and Nash simultaneously … Interfered in the Hogan-Roddy Piper bout at Starrcade '96 and attempted to choke-slam Piper. But Piper bit him in the face and Giant tumbled over the ropes, giving Piper the opportunity to clamp on a sleeper and win the match … Hall and Nash accused Giant of "dropping the ball" by failing to rescue Hogan. Giant asked them why they didn't help him in his match against Luger, who had pinned him earlier on the card. He returned to the locker room alone … The Giant was officially tossed from the NWO at the December 30 *Nitro*. Hogan and Piper were trading punches when the NWO stormed the ring. Hogan ordered The Giant to choke-slam Piper. Giant grabbed Piper by the throat, then let him go and ordered the other NWO members to clear the ring. At that point, he asked Hogan for the title shot he had earned at World War III. Hogan begged for mercy, agreed to give him the match, then ordered the NWO to attack Giant … Was voted Rookie of the Year and Wrestler of the Year for 1996 by *PWI* readers and placed fourth in the voting for Most Hated Wrestler of the Year … Was soon befriended by Luger … Battled Hogan to a no-contest at NWO Souled Out, then had his back spray-painted by the NWO afterward … Wrestled World tag team champs Hall and Nash on his own at SuperBrawl VII because Luger, his partner, had a hand injury. But Luger came out later, forced Nash to submit to his "torture rack," then tagged The Giant, who choke-slammed and pinned Hall … Luger and Giant thought they were World tag champs … WCW Executive Vice President and NWO head Eric Bischoff ordered the belts returned to Hall and Nash the next night … Team WCW, consisting of Giant, Luger, and the Steiners, and Team Piper lost a three-way match to the NWO at Uncensored on March 16, 1997 … Continued teaming with Luger … After an outstanding 1996, The Giant has had trouble coming up with an encore for '97. But his partnership with Luger has been outstanding, and there's no reason to believe he won't once again challenge Hogan for the World title. □

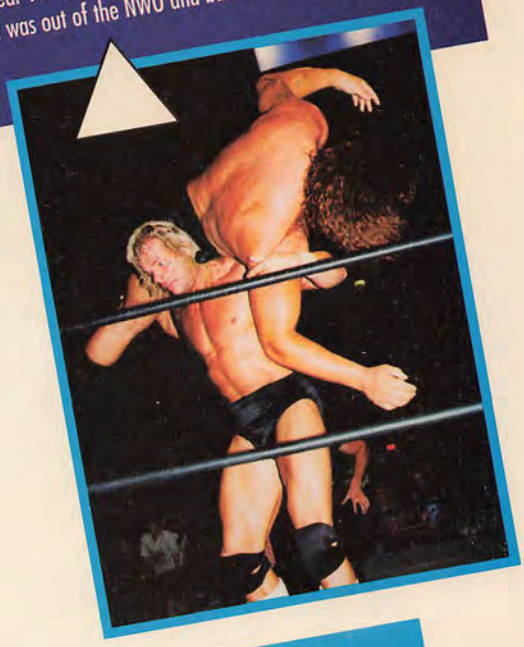
PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED
THE GIANT
WCW's Tower Of Power

GREATEST MATCH

vs. Ric Flair, April 22, 1996. We all know The Giant is the only rookie ever to win a world heavyweight title, but what was most remarkable about his victory for the WCW championship was that it came against one of the sport's all-time greats and that he beat Flair cleanly. The "Nature Boy" tried using low blows, a foreign object, and even got Giant in his figure-four, but Giant still choke-slammed and pinned him in less than five minutes!

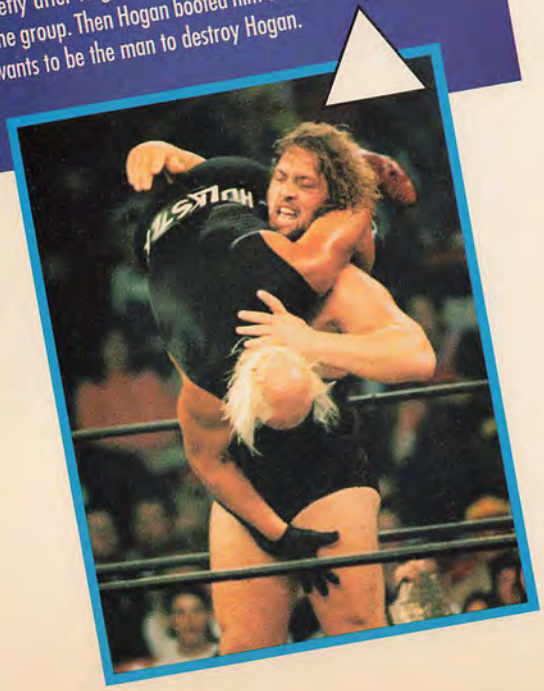
TOUGHEST OPPONENT

Lex Luger. ***Luger*** and ***The Giant*** only recently became good friends, but they have always had a lot of respect for each other's skills. Giant knows how strong and resilient Luger is, as Lex is one of the few men to pin him. He did so at Starrcade last year ... with a little help from Sting's bat. One night later, Giant was out of the NWO and back on WCW's side.



MOST HATED OPPONENT

Hulk Hogan. Theirs is a most complicated relationship. The Giant came to WCW in 1995 looking to crush "Hulkamania." He did a lot of damage to Hogan, but he didn't destroy him. Then the two feuded briefly after Hogan formed the NWO. Then Hogan invited him into the group. Then Hogan booted him out. The now-popular Giant still wants to be the man to destroy Hogan.

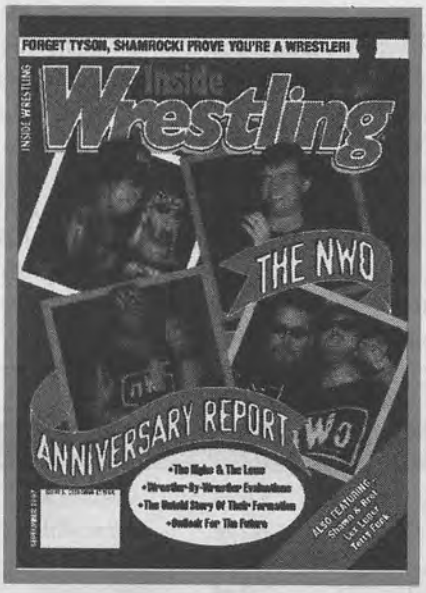


FAVORITE MANEUVER

The choke-slam. Most huge wrestlers don't favor a complicated finisher, and The Giant, though he has remarkable agility for a man 7'4" and 430 pounds, is no exception. He'll just grab his opponent by the throat, hoist him into the air, and drive him down into the mat. He wins most matches with it. Only Hogan has gotten up from the move, but he's in no hurry to feel its effects again.

this month in...

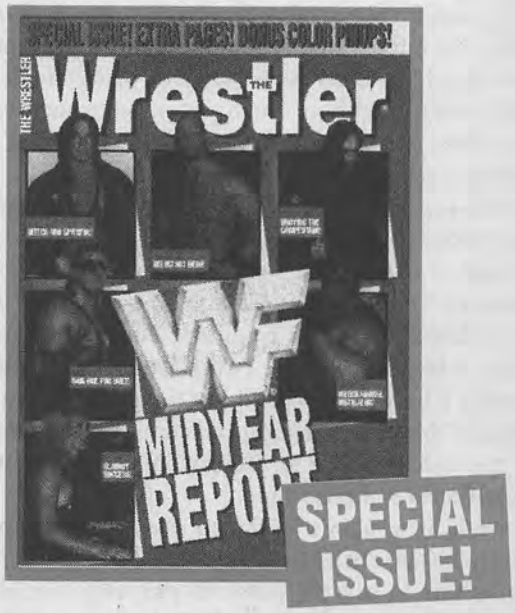
Inside Wrestling



It's been a year since **HULK HOGAN**, **SCOTT HALL**, and **KEVIN NASH** formed the most powerful supergroup in wrestling history. How's the NWO doing? We have the highs and lows of the first year and wrestler-by-wrestler evaluations. We also have the untold story of the NWO's formation and speculate about its future … **LEX LUGER** has had a lot of success in his 12-year career, but he didn't feel like he had really made it until he received the call of his lifetime … Is 53-year-old **TERRY FUNK** ready to retire? No way! He says it only hurts when he stops!

All this—and much more!—
in the September 1997 issue of
Inside Wrestling

The Wrestler



It's that time of year again—time for our WWF Midyear Report. The World title was (and still is) in a state of turmoil, **BRET HART** reunited with **OWEN** and **DAVEY BOY**, but lost millions of fans in the process, and **BIG VAN VADER** caused an international incident. We'll review the good, the bad, the wild, and the wacky from the first half of '97 in the WWF … **KEVIN NASH** has presented a list of demands to **ERIC BISCHOFF** and **HULK HOGAN**. Will they meet them? … It sounds strange, but we think **SHAWN MICHAELS** ought to thank **BRET HART**. We'll explain what we mean.

All this—and much more!—
in the September 1997 issue of
The Wrestler

WWF vs. WCW

Each month, PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED takes a close look at the latest developments in the most crucial battle in the sport's history!

THE WWF WINS! The WWF wins! That's right, we can finally say that the WWF's *Raw Is War* got better ratings than WCW's *Nitro*. It happened a few times this May. Okay, so it only took place during weeks in which *Nitro* aired from 7 to 8 p.m. Eastern and *Raw* was on from 8 to 10 p.m., but right now, the WWF is probably willing to take any ratings victory it can get.

And you better believe WWF higher-ups are monitoring this ratings war very closely. They had better be, because executives at the USA Network are doing the same. USA announced in late-May that *Raw Is War* would be moved to a different time slot beginning August 4. Starting that night, reruns of *Walker, Texas Ranger*, an action series starring Chuck Norris, will air from 8 to 9 p.m. Eastern Monday through Friday. Speculation was that *Raw* would be moved to 9 to 11 p.m. Eastern on Mondays, but that was not definite as of press time.

While it wouldn't be fair to assume USA moved *Raw* simply because it is unhappy with the show's ratings, it seems fair to say the network probably wouldn't have moved the program if it was *thrilled* with its ratings.

On a different front, there were a lot of interesting stories going around about former WCW wrestler Disco Inferno in the weeks before this magazine went to press. As you probably know, Disco had a disagreement with the powers-that-be at WCW back in February and subsequently left the federation. Of course, whenever any wrestler of note suddenly leaves WCW or the WWF these days, we hear rumors that his next stop will be the other federation (in this case, the WWF).

A few months ago, there were even rumors going around that Disco would be The Honky Tonk Man's new protege. But because Disco had a no-compete clause in his WCW contract that prevented him from wrestling for the WWF for several months after he left WCW, the WWF denied having any dealings with him immediately after his departure from WCW. In a war like this, you don't want to be accused of tampering with a wrestler who's still under contract to your rival. We still think Disco will end up in the WWF sometime, maybe even by the time you're reading this, but we might never know exactly when he was first approached by the federation.

NIELSEN RATINGS

	Date	Rating	Households	Main Event
Raw	5/12	3.3	2.25 mil.	Johnson-Helmsley
*Nitro	5/12	2.9	2.02 mil.	Malenko-McMichael
Raw	5/19	3.6	2.52 mil.	Austin-Neidhart
*Nitro	5/19	3.1	2.21 mil.	Syxx-Flair
Raw	5/26	2.7	1.94 mil.	Austin/Michaels-Owen/Bulldog
Nitro	5/26	3.3	2.31 mil.	Jarrett/McMichael-Heat
Raw	6/2	2.5	1.75 mil.	Warriors-Michaels/Austin
Nitro	6/2	3.3	2.36 mil.	Flair-Hall

**7 p.m. Eastern start*
Cumulative: Nitro—3.04; Raw—2.59

VOICE OF THE FANS

Once again it looks like the balance of power for the top spot of the wrestling world is shifting. WCW has lost some of its strength ever since the NBA playoffs began, when *Nitro* was crammed into a one-hour time slot for a few weeks. *Raw* has gained in both quality and appeal with the addition of the new ramp and giant video screen. The live crowd even seems to be more into the matches than it was in recent months. Will the WWF finally gain momentum and crush WCW? I doubt it, but the race has finally gotten interesting again.

ALAN FARCEY
Detroit

I think the WWF was given as unfair advantage when *Nitro* was moved from its usual time slot. Ever since this move was made, *Nitro* has lost something. Even the NWO isn't interesting anymore, but at least *Nitro* is still ahead in the overall ratings war.

DEREK HEALEY
Savannah, GA

I find it interesting that *Nitro* does consistently well in the ratings whether Hulk Hogan is there or not. I know "Hollywood" and the rest of the NWO would like fans to believe Hogan is the reason for the good ratings, but the numbers tell a different story. WCW is winning the war even without Hogan's help.

MIKE LAWRENCE
Weirton, WV

VENDETTA

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the steel cage

By Dave Rosenbaum

ANYBODY NEED TICKETS? Ladies and gentlemen of the reading public, you have been lied to by the WWF. You have been hooked and swindled. Had one put over on you. I'm sure of this.

I think.

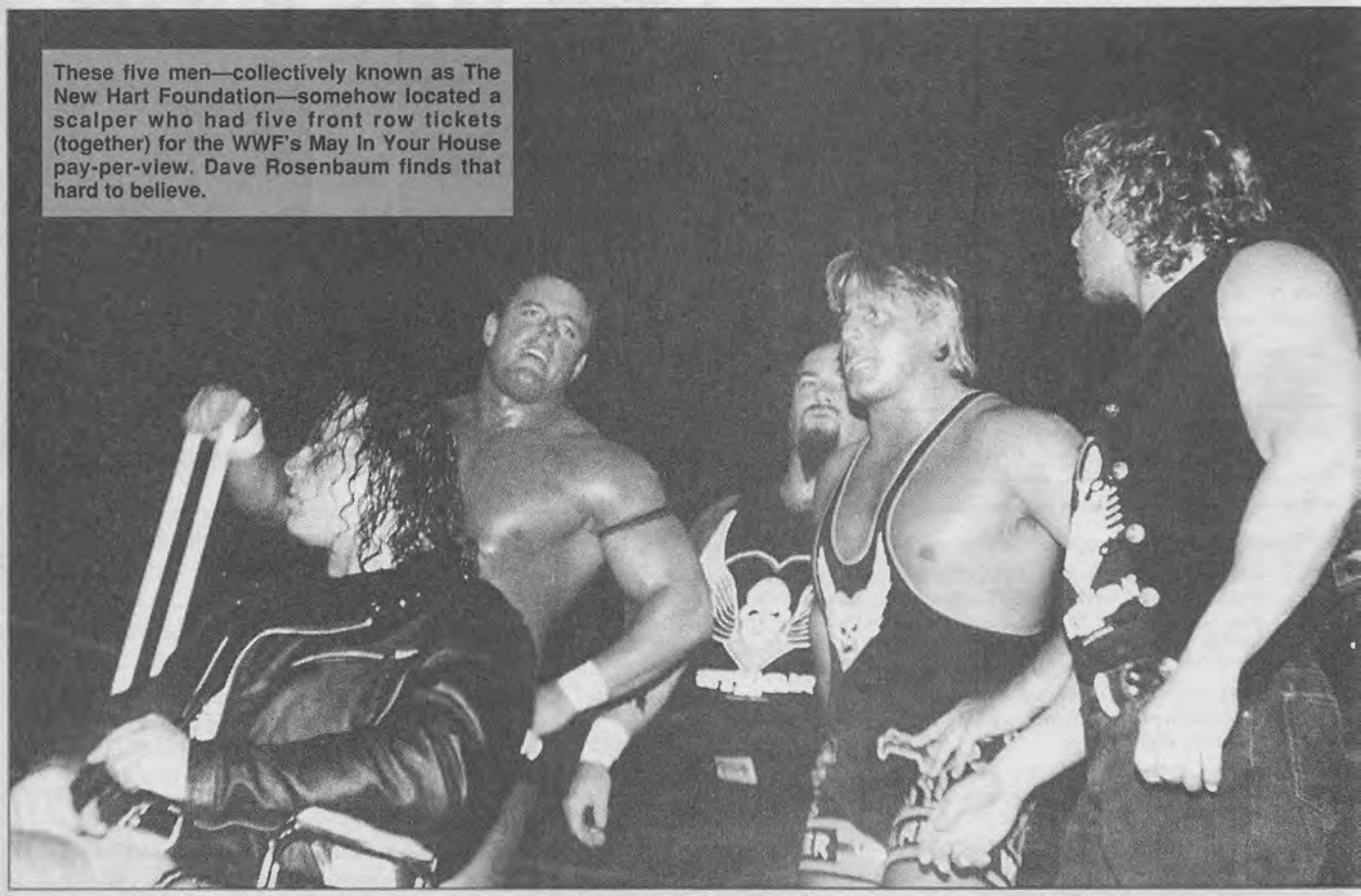
See, that's the problem with dealing with sources who refuse to let you use their names. You investigate something, verify your suspicions, get it checked and double-checked, but everybody refuses to go on the record, as if you were looking into a mob hit or checking out the National Hockey League's replay officials. So I will lead you along the trail. Show you the evidence.

Decide for yourself.

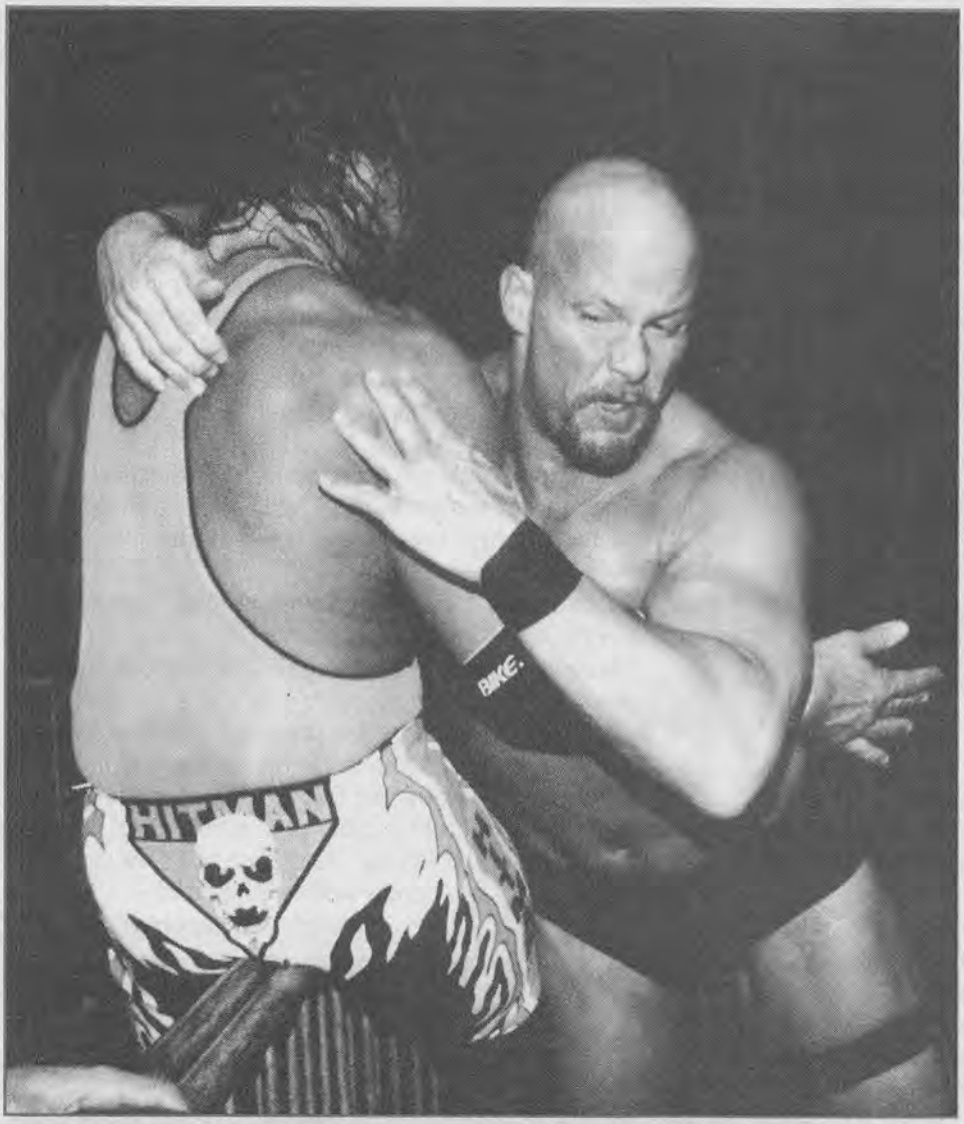
THE SCENARIO IN QUESTION: Brian Pillman, Bret Hart, Owen Hart, Davey Boy Smith, and Jim Neidhart purchased five front row tickets to In Your House XIV on May 11 in Richmond, Virginia. Pillman later interfered in the Undertaker-Steve Austin WWF World title bout by leaning over the safety railing and ringing the timekeeper's bell as Austin covered Undertaker for the pin (he had just executed a "Stone-Cold stunner" on 'Taker). The pin attempt was broken at a count of two, the match continued, and Undertaker eventually used his "tombstone" piledriver to pin Austin and retain the title.

THE BIG QUESTION: A scalper had five front row tickets to a major pay-per-view event?

WHY THIS IS A PROBLEM: Scalpers generally buy tickets in pairs. Usually two at a time or four at a time. They don't buy single tickets because people usually attend events in groups. They don't buy six or eight seats together for two reasons: 1. It's rare



These five men—collectively known as The New Hart Foundation—somehow located a scalper who had five front row tickets (together) for the WWF's May In Your House pay-per-view. Dave Rosenbaum finds that hard to believe.



Steve Austin now has another reason to hate Bret Hart—he feels the "Hitman" and his cronies cost him the WWF title. But was the WWF indirectly to blame for what happened at IYH as well?

that somebody needs six or eight. 2. Let's say you sell your eight seats in two sets of four for different prices. Somebody's going to think they were ripped off. Anyway, the chances of any scalper having five tickets together are very remote. Therefore, it's unlikely that The New Hart Foundation bought their tickets from a scalper in front of the building on match night, or from a ticket broker in Virginia.

MY THEORY: They didn't buy their tickets from a scalper or broker. The tickets were given to them by WWF insiders in the hope that the Foundation would spruce up the pay-per-view with some ringside intrigue.

THE TRAIL OF EVIDENCE: 1. None of the major ticket brokers in Virginia or the Middle Atlantic region could recall receiving an order for five front row tickets to In Your House within the three weeks leading up to the event.

2. I spoke to several known ticket scalpers in Virginia. Only one of the six had any front row tickets to In Your House XIV, and he had only two single seats purchased from two different fans about an hour before bell time.

3. A portion of seats in the first five rows for all WWF events are retained by the federation for distribution to wrestlers, employees, and federation clients, such as advertisers and TV station representatives.

4. Asked how much they spent for their tickets, Davey Boy Smith hesitated and said, "Thirty bucks apiece." "No way," said one of the scalpers I spoke with. "Ringside tickets to a WWF pay-per-view usually go for about 60 bucks. Even more for five together."

5. The WWF marketing department, I'm told, received a request for five tickets from The New Hart Foundation less than two days before the card. According to insiders, the request was neither approved nor denied, but sent on to a high-ranking federation executive.

6. A person standing outside the ticket office said she saw "somebody who looked a lot like Jim Neidhart" going up to the will call window about 15 minutes before bell time.

7. Ticket-scalping activity outside the arena was "minimal," according to a local security officer.

8. According to a WWF insider, a top executive told him that "The New Hart Foundation is going to be at the card, but you won't believe where they're sitting."

CONCLUSION: The New Hart Foundation did not pay for their tickets. The WWF gave them five front row tickets. Therefore, Steve Austin is not the World champion today because of outside interference caused by the federation.

"It seemed real strange to me," Austin said. "I couldn't believe those five guys were sitting at ringside and nobody did a damn thing about it. What else were they there for if they weren't gonna interfere? I just can't believe the WWF is going to let this decision stand. Pillman interfered, so at the very least it should have been a DQ win for me. Not that it would have done me any damn good. I still wouldn't have the belt."

There are two morals to this story:

1. If you want good seats, it pays to have friends in the business.

2. Don't believe everything the WWF tells you. □

win lose or draw

BY ANDY RODRIGUEZ

RAVEN DEFINES ECW. That's what his fans (there are a few out there) say. But those who know him even better say he's ready to throw away that definition.

The bottom line for Raven, of course, is not pleasing his fans. It is winning championships. It is hurting people. It is proving he is one of the most dangerous men in the world. Sometimes, when a man feels he has conquered one federation—Raven, despite losing the ECW title to Terry Funk at Barely Legal, has been the most dominant wrestler in ECW the last two years—he feels the need to move on and conquer another.

The rumors have Raven headed back to WCW, where he won the now-defunct light heavyweight title in 1992 as Scotty Flamingo. He doesn't deny them.

"I'll go where I have to go," he simply says. "Just where I have to go."

Clearly, his departure will change the organization he helped make famous. He is a terrifically talented wrestler. He is also a dark, morose, violent man. "Violent" is the key. ECW has come to be defined by the level of violence in its contests. Raven has led the way.

"A lot of guys here really respect him," said ECW's Paul E. Dangerously. "They appreciate his style. They like his guts, and they like to test themselves against him. He's a trendsetter."

"Raven can be very much in control," said Shane Douglas, who has teamed with him on occasion. "But he's also very explosive, and he knows how to use that explosiveness to his advantage. You can call that being violent if you want to, and I'm sure it wouldn't bother Raven."

"Violent?" Raven answered. "Yeah, I am. Who isn't? What competitor in this sport who wants to succeed isn't violent? My only goal in every contest is to win. I do what I have to and I'm never sorry."

Like just about every ECW wrestler, Raven is a master at using the means at his disposal. In ECW, a steel folding chair is nearly as necessary to an athlete as a pair of tights.

Although WCW has imitated ECW somewhat, there still does not reside there a Wild West atmosphere, and for the first time in his career, that's fine with Raven.

"I can adjust to new circumstances," he said. "I have the ability to change my style."

And, in the process, change ECW not just in style, but in composition. Already there are rumors that other ECW competitors are prepared to follow Raven. Stevie Richards, his former lackey, perhaps?

"People see a guy like Raven going for what some people think is greater glory and, yeah, they're going to be tempted to leave," said former ECW wrestler Hack Myers. "They know what's going on."

(Continued on page 46)

For two years, Raven has enjoyed the violent world of ECW. He has thrived in barbed-wire matches with other warriors such as The Sandman. Now it looks like ECW will soon have to get used to life without him.

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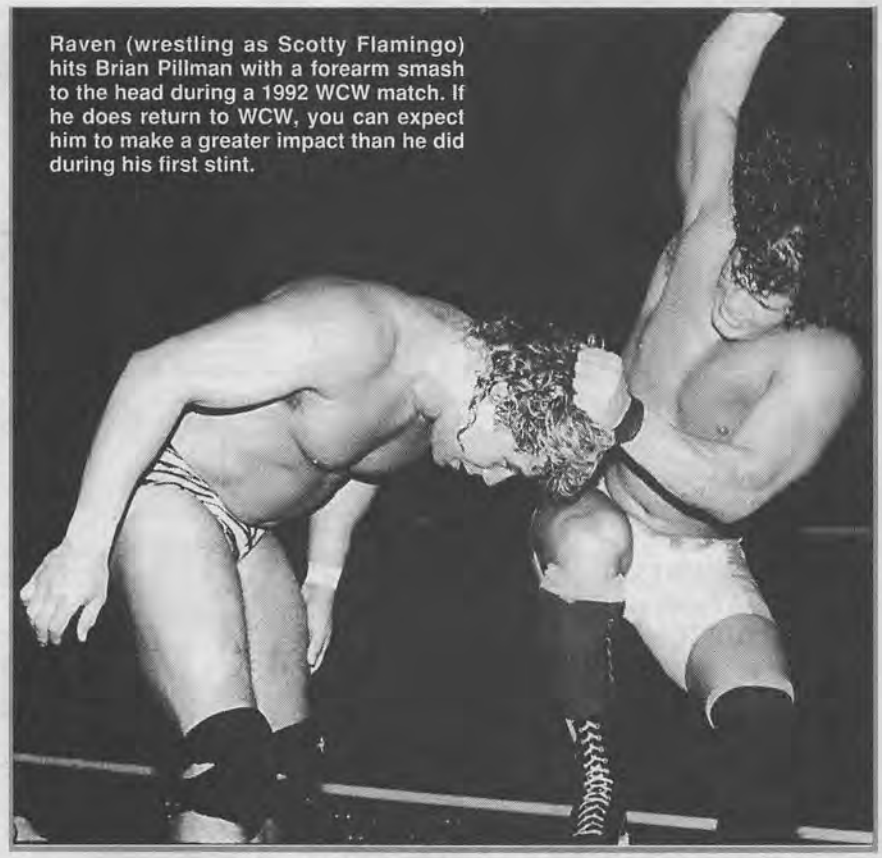
win, lose, or draw

(Continued from page 44)



Raven (wrestling as Scotty Flamingo) hits Brian Pillman with a forearm smash to the head during a 1992 WCW match. If he does return to WCW, you can expect him to make a greater impact than he did during his first stint.

But the activities of others don't concern Raven much. After all, ECW may be considered big-time to some, but Raven's on his way to the *big* big-time, where a guy has to look out for himself. Probably.

Raven may not only be joining WCW. There's a good chance he may jump directly into the NWO. First of all, this, too, is something he doesn't deny.

"The NWO is one hell of an organization from what I've heard," he said. "That's what I've heard. I haven't had the opportunity to follow them much. After all, I'm with ECW now."

The NWO, which is a little unsure of itself at the moment, surely would love to have in its ranks an athlete of Raven's high caliber and brutal intensity.

"Are you kidding?" said a source close to the NWO. "That guy would fit right in. He's a rebel. He doesn't care about authority. I'm sure he'd be very comfortable within that group."

Raven, however, has never been comfortable taking orders from anyone. There's a deal-killer for him. But they very likely could help him win title matches and get him more national exposure. There's a deal-maker for him.

For the moment, though, the NWO is not a concern of Raven. He competes in ECW. And if doesn't keep his mind on the competition there, he may never get to WCW.

"He better not forget that he's still part of this organization!" said The Sandman. "He has people to face here, people who are sick and tired of hearing how great Raven is! There's nothing bigger in my mind than making it in ECW, especially making it at the expense of Raven!"

Not to worry, say Raven's supporters.

"Look, he's completely focused on the competition in ECW," said Douglas. "In fact, it's The Sandman who should be worried. Raven's never been sharper. He'd also like to win back that ECW belt. There's trouble for [Terry] Funk. No, I don't think you're going to see Raven slip."

The rumors have Raven leaving ECW in August, after the promotion's second pay-per-view. ECW's first PPV, in April, did fairly well. The question is, if Raven and some others take off, will there be a third?

"ECW is here to stay," said ECW President Tod Gordon. "There are some great athletes here, but ultimately, no one man is bigger than the whole. Wrestlers leave and wrestlers arrive. Believe me, there are a lot of hungry young guys who are aching to compete in ECW."

That may be true, but those young guys need time to establish themselves. If too much talent leaves too quickly, interest in ECW could drop off significantly, and for an organization that's striving to present itself as a credible alternative to the Big Two, that would be deadly.

Which is why what Raven does is so important.

"I deal with my circumstances," Raven responded. "That's all I do. I speak for no one but myself. I don't carry anyone else's banner. My next move will be taken in my interests and my interests only. "

For so long now, Raven's interests have been ECW's interests. But it looks like that is all about to change. One very talented wrestler is looking for a new challenge.

And one very exciting organization will need to replace him. □

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arena reports

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UNITED STATES

DELAWARE

WILMINGTON—ECWA at St. Matthew's Parish Hall: **Billy Kidman** pinned **Devon Storm** ... **Ace Darling** pinned NWA North American champ **Lance Diamond** to win the title ... **Inferno Kid** defeated **Viper** ... **Nasty Angel** defeated **Fantasia** to win the ECWA women's title ... **Ronnie Roberts** defeated **Boogie Woogie Brown** ... **Warhawk** pinned **The Commando** ... **Mr. Ooh La La** pinned **Cowboy Blaze** ... Heavyweight champ **Glen Osbourne** defeated **Armageddon** in a Texas bullrope match ... **Cheetah Master** beat **Honky Tonk Man** by disqualification ... **Cheetah Master** & **Lance Diamond** defeated tag team champs **Viper** & **Armageddon** to win the title.
(04-26-97)

—Gina Makoul

FLORIDA

HOMESTEAD—Sunshine Wrestling Federation at the SWF Arena: **Vampire Warrior** (with **Luna Vachon**) beat **Joe Defuria** by disqualification ... **Paul Adonis** beat **Punk Rock** ... **Johnny Gonzalez** beat **Snot Dudley** by countout ... **"Big" Mike DeAngelo** wrestled **The Looter** to a double-disqualification ... **Riptide** beat **Luna Vachon** by disqualification ... **Madman Pondo** wrestled **Ox Baker Jr.** to a double-disqualification.
(05-09-97)

—Bernie Siegel

LAKELAND—*WCW Monday Nitro* at the Civic Center: Cruiserweight champ **Syxx** defeated **Rey Misterio Jr.** by submission after **Scott Hall** & **Kevin Nash** interfered ... **Lord Steven Regal** defeated **Meng** by disqualification ... **Jeff Jarrett** beat **Alex Wright** by submission ... The scheduled match between **Harlem Heat** and **The Giant** & **"Diamond" Dallas Page** never took place as **Hulk Hogan** & **Randy Savage** attacked Page as he was making his way to the ring ... **Steve McMichael** pinned **Rick Fuller** ... **Joe Gomez** pinned **The Renegade** ... **Madusa** pinned **Debbie Combs** ... **Juventud Guerrera** pinned **Psicosis** ... **Rick** & **Scott Steiner** defeated **The Power Company**.
(05-05-97)

—Chris Mobley

NEW PORT RITCHIE—WPWF at Coast-to-Coast Bail Bonds: **Gorgeous Johnny**, **O.G. Scarface**, & **Panther** defeated **Dragon Fire**, **Tank**, & **Blue Falcon** ... **Iceman** pinned **Lou Lassiter** ... **Steve Sali** defeated **Chopper** by disqualification ... **Excalibur** defeated **Art Strong** ... **Celtic Warrior** & **Black Knight** beat **Tim Towers** & **B.J. McQuaide** ... **Khazar the Barbarian** beat **J.D. Slaughter** ... **Bulldozer Benton** & **"Leaping" Lanny Poffo** (with **Angelo Poffo**) defeated **Dan Manson** & **Romeo Rossalini** to win the tag team title ... **The Original Russian Assassin** defeated **Steve Breeze** (substituting for **Sasquatch**) to win the heavyweight title.
(04-20-97)

—Timothy A. Walker

GEORGIA

ROSSVILLE—Tri-Star Wrestling at the TWA Arena: **Great Scott**, **Widowmaker**, & **Kahn** wrestled **T.S. Norton**, **Randy Watkins**, & **Richie Dye** to a no-contest in a best-of-three-falls match ... **Mighty Heidi** beat **The Deaf Stalker** ... **Risk Taylor** & **The Outpatient** won a four-team elimination match against **The Natural Born Killers**, **Adams Jacobs** & **Toy Dodson**, and **Shane Wild** & **Jimmy Sharpe**.
(05-09-97)

—Bill Needham

IOWA

SIOUX CITY—WWF at Municipal Auditorium: **Jesse James** pinned **D-Lo Brown** ... **Flash Funk** pinned **Steve Lombardi** ... **Ahmed Johnson** defeated **Crush** by disqualification ... **Phineas Godwinn** beat **Savio Vega** by disqualification ... **Steve Austin** pinned **Owen Hart** ... **Hunter Hearst Helmsley** pinned **Goldust** ... Intercontinental champ **Rocky Maivia** pinned **Rockabilly** ... **The New Blackjacks** defeated **Doug Furnas** & **Phil Lafon** when **Barry Windham** pinned Lafon ... World champ **The Undertaker** pinned **Davey Boy Smith**.
(04-27-97)

—Monty Schmidt

KENTUCKY

MIDDLESBORO—Capital Pro Wrestling at the Redman: **Timothy Shaw** beat **The Lumberjack** ... **Knight Rider** beat **Steady Eddie** ... U.S. champ **Flex Hutton** beat **Mike Woody** ... **The Matador** beat **Kid Lightning** ... **The Mongolian Stomper** & **Big Jess** defeated tag team champions **Jimmy Golden** & **The Gladiator** to win the title.
(05-10-97)

—Bill Needham

CAMPTON—Hardcore Championship Wrestling at the Wolfe County High School: **Ric Gunner** beat **Too Hot Thomas** by disqualification ... **The Street Warriors** defeated **Steve Golden** & **Mason Storm** ... **Alex Draven** beat **Mike the Hammer** ... **Alex Draven** beat **Mr. Paradise** in a country whipping match ... **Shawn Christopher** beat **Eddie T** in a streetfight.
(04-25-97)

—Bill Needham

LOUISIANA

AMELIA—Mid-South Wrestling at the Community Center: **Doink** (not the original) beat **Motor City Madman** ... **Tommy Martinelli** defeated **Steve Southern** ... **Psycho Mike** & **The Mustang** defeated **Steve Diamond** & **Sexy Boy Busby** ... **Kevin Northcutt** defeated **Mr. Wrestling III** by disqualification ... **Hard Time Inc.** defeated **S & S Express** ... **Lord Humongous** (not the original) beat **The Crazy Cajun**.
(05-10-97)

—Brett Wolfe

MARYLAND

BALTIMORE—Mid-Eastern Wrestling Federation at the Teamster Auditorium: **Jimmy Cicero** beat **Earl the Pearl** ... **Raven** defeated **Joe Thunder** ... **Quinn Nash** beat **Steve Corino** ... **Stevie Richards** beat **Disco Inferno** by disqualification ... The boxing match between **Miss Patricia** and **Brittany** was declared a no-contest ... **Salvatore Sincere** & **Buddy Landell** wrestled **Chris Candido** & **Scott Putski** (with **Missy Hyatt**) to a no-contest when Candido turned against Putski ... **The Pit Bulls** wrestled **The Samoan Gangsta Tribe** to a double-countout ... **John Rambo** wrestled **B. Mahoney** to a time-limit draw ... **Adam Flash** pinned **The Inferno Kid** ... **Mark Schrader** & **Devon Storm** wrestled **The Headbangers** to a double-disqualification.
(04-27-97)

—Michael J. DiMuzio

BOONSBORO—National Wrestling League at Bullpen Arena: **Dasariens** defeated **Bobby Starr** & **Prof. Egon Ecton** ... **Blackhawk** & **Morgus the Maniac** defeated **Slicky Boy** & **Switchblade** ... **The Grungers** defeated **Mark Schrader** & **Big Slam** by disqualification ... **Buddy Landell** pinned **Morgus the Maniac** ... **Big Gun** beat **Doug Deeds** ... **Scott Putski** (with **Missy Hyatt**) pinned **Jimmy Cicero** ... **John Rambo** defeated **Disco Inferno** in a steel cage match.
(04-19-97)

—Michael J. DiMuzio

MASSACHUSETTS

REVERE—Extreme Championship Wrestling at Wonderland Greyhound Park: **Tracey Smothers** & **Little Guido** defeated **"Hollywood" Nova** (**Super Nova**) & **Da Blue Guy** (**The Blue Meanie**)

... **Stevie Richards** won a battle royal ... **B. Mahoney** defeated **Axl Rotten** ... **Raven** defeated **Spike Dudley** ... **Louie Spicolli** beat **Chris Chetti** by disqualification ... **Stevie Richards** beat TV champ **Shane Douglas** by disqualification ... **Sabu** & **Rob Van Dam** beat **The Pit Bulls** ... Tag team champs **The Eliminators** beat **Sabu** & **Rob Van Dam** and **"Big" Dick** & **D-Von Dudley** in a three-way match.
(04-26-97)

—Ed Nealon

MICHIGAN

SAGINAW—*WCW Monday Nitro* at the Civic Center: U.S. champ **Dean Malenko** defeated **Yuji Nagata** by submission ... **Glacier** beat **Ciclope** ... TV champ **Ultimo Dragon** beat **Bobby Eaton** by submission ... **Meng** defeated **Chris Jericho** by submission ... **Rick** & **Scott Steiner** wrestled **Public Enemy** to a no-contest ... **Jeff Jarrett** defeated **Scotty Riggs** ... **Rey Misterio Jr.** defeated cruiserweight champ **Syxx** by disqualification when **Kevin Nash** interfered ... **"Diamond" Dallas Page** pinned **Psicosis.**
(04-21-97)

—Nick DeLorge

NEW JERSEY

MORRISTOWN—World Wrestling Coalition benefit show for the Make-a-Wish Foundation at the Mennen Arena: **Lucifer Grimm** pinned **Tom Thunder** ... **Kid U.S.A. Armand** beat **Larry Brisco** ... **Cousin Luke** defeated **H.D. Rider** ... **Mr. Motion** beat **Slayer** and **"Wacky" Wayne Woo** in a triangle match ... **Devon Storm** defeated **Gino Caruso** ... **Tito Santana** beat **Ace Darling** ... **Jimmy Snuka** pinned **Metal Maniac.**
(05-10-97)

—Michael J. DiMuzio

KEYPORT—New Jack City Wrestling at the High School: **Chino** defeated **Magic** ... **Ace Darling** pinned **Reckless Youth** ... **The Latin Lowriders** beat **Steve Corino** & **Twiggy Ramirez** ... **Jack Hammer** defeated **Devon Storm** by disqualification ... **Stevie Richards** & **Super Nova** beat **J.R. Rider** & **Lupus** ... **Ghetto Blaster** beat **Mr. Lucifer** by disqualification ... **King Kong Bundy** defeated **Primo Carnera III** by countout ... **Raven** defeated **Tommy Dreamer** in a falls-count-anywhere match.
(05-04-97)

—Allen Wells

ASBURY PARK—ECW at the Convention Center (highlights): **Axl Rotten** pinned **Spike Dudley** ... Tag team champs **The Eliminators** defeated **"Big" Dick** & **D-Von Dudley** and **The Gangstas** in a three-way match ... **Tommy Dreamer** defeated **Corporal Punishment** by disqualification when **Louie Spicolli**, dressed exactly liked Dreamer, interfered ... **B. Mahoney** beat TV champ **Shane Douglas** by disqualification when **Chris Candido** interfered ... **Chris Candido** & **Taz** defeated **Sabu** & **Rob Van Dam** ... **Stevie Richards** defeated **Raven** and **The Sandman** in a three-way match ... Heavyweight champ **Terry Funk** pinned **Stevie Richards.**
(05-02-97)

—Bob Lerner

WOODBURY—NWA at the Armory: **Ralph Soto** pinned **Rocco Dorsey** ... **Steve Corino** defeated **Twiggy Ramirez** (with **Madonna Wayne Gacy** & **Adrian Hall**) ... **The Icon** beat **Patch** ... **Scott Putski** defeated **Dave Keller** ... Heavyweight champ **Dan Severn** defeated **Jimmy Cicero** by submission ... **Dick Trimmins** pinned **Billy Real** ... North American champ **Ace Darling** defeated **Rik Ratchet** (with **Miss Patricia**) ... U.S. tag team champs **The Beach Bums** wrestled **The Brothers of East L.A.** to a double-countout ... **Buddy Landell** (with **Royce Prophet**) pinned **Disco Inferno.**
(04-26-97)

—Michael J. DiMuzio

NEW YORK

DEER PARK—Ultimate Championship Wrestling at the Community Center: **"Misfit" Harley Lewis** pinned **"Live Wire" Dave Desire** ... **La Raza** defeated **"Misfit" Derek Domino** when **Angel** interfered ... **"Bronco" Barry Houston** beat **Black Sheepe** ... **Paul Lauria** & **Stormin' Norman** beat **Jimmy DeRanged** & **Kamikaze Kid** ... **Jim Neidhart** beat **La Raza** ... **Marty Jannetty** pinned **Falcon Coperis** with help from **Bruce Hart** ... **Tommy Cairo** wrestled **Tatanka** to a no-contest.
(05-11-97)

—Bill Demmer

REGO PARK—ECW at the Elks Lodge: **Axl Rotten** beat **Chris Chetti** ... **Spike Dudley** beat **Little Guido** ... **B. Mahoney** defeated **The New Jersey Devil** ... **Tommy Dreamer** beat **Louie Spicolli** ... TV champ **Shane Douglas** defeated **Pit Bull I** ... Tag team champs **The Eliminators** won a triangle match over **The Gangstas** and **"Big" Dick** & **D-Von Dudley** ... **Raven** won a triangle match over **The Sandman** and **Stevie Richards** ... Heavyweight champ **Terry Funk** beat **Raven** ... **Taz** & **Chris Candido** defeated **Sabu** & **Rob Van Dam.**
(05-08-97)

—Tom Hardison

BINGHAMTON—*WWF Monday Night Raw* broadcast & *Shotgun Saturday Night* tapings at the Broome County Arena: **Ahmed Johnson** beat **The Sultan** ... **Bret Hart** wrestled **Steve Austin** to a no-contest in a streetfight ... **Tiger Ali Singh** defeated **Salvatore Sincere** ... **Rockabilly** defeated **Jesse James** ... World champ **The Undertaker** defeated **Hunter Hearst Helmsley** by disqualification ... **Crush**, **Savio Vega**, & **D-Lo Brown** defeated **Aldo Montoya**, **Freddie Joe Floyd**, & **Steve Corino** ... **The Road Warriors** beat World tag team champs **Owen Hart** & **Davey Boy Smith** by disqualification ... Intercontinental champ **Rocky Maivia** defeated **Tony DiVito** ... **The Road Warriors** beat **Henry** & **Phineas Godwinn.**
(04-21-97)

—Joey Bernard

ROCHESTER—WWF In Your House pay-per-view at the War Memorial Auditorium: **The Road Warriors** defeated World tag team champs **Owen Hart** & **Davey Boy Smith** by disqualification when **Bret Hart** interfered ... **Jesse James** beat **Rockabilly Gunn** ... World champ **The Undertaker** pinned **Mankind** ... **Savio Vega** defeated Intercontinental champ **Rocky Maivia** by countout after **Crush** interfered ... **Steve Austin** defeated **Bret Hart** by disqualification when **Owen Hart** & **Davey Boy Smith** interfered.
(04-20-97)

—George Hill

NORTH CAROLINA

BISCOE—Carolina Championship Wrestling at the East Montgomery High School: **Tyrone Knox** wrestled **Kevin Kirby** to a draw ... **One Man Posse** & **The Cannon** beat **Tom Jackson** & **Will Shooter** ... **Colt Steele** wrestled **L.A. Stephens** to a double-countout ... **Willie Clay Sr.** & **Madd Maxx** beat **Hunter Thompson** & **The Gladiator** in a best-of-three-falls match ... **Ron Studd** beat

(Continued on page 50)

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arena reports

(Continued from page 49)

Denny Cooley ... **Disco Inferno**, **Jimmy Valiant**, & **Rikki Nelson** defeated **Gary Royal**, **The Assassin**, & **"Pistol" Pez Whatley**.
(05-10-97)

—Dan Parris

ELKIN—Southern Wrestling Association at the Armory: **The American Ninja** defeated **Duke of New York** ... **Marty Lewis** defeated **The Master Assassin** ... **Razen Cain** defeated **Wild Child Grunge** ... **K.C. Thunder** & **C.W. Anderson** beat **Scotty Powers** & **Samoan Tai** ... **David Jericho** pinned **Rusty Riddle** ... **The Grappler** beat **Shane Anderson**.
(05-10-97)

—Allan Barrie & Marcus Watkins

MOUNT AIRY—AIWF at Veterans Memorial Park: **Body Count** beat **Dr. Love** ... Light heavyweight champ **Robert Roma** beat **Nail Leathers** ... **The Ghost Riders** defeated **The Family of Darkness** ... **The Tennessee Violence Authority** beat tag team champs **Cyclone** & **Jumpin' Jimmy** to win the belts ... **Body Count** won a bunkhouse battle royal.
(05-10-97)

—Dean Puckett

TRINITY—Alternative Championship Wrestling at the High School: **Jimmy Valiant** wrestled **Tim Blaze** to a double-countout ... **Nighthawk** defeated **The Southern Stud** by disqualification ... **The Lumberjacks** beat **The Survivors** and **Sebastian Kane** & **Dynamite Doug** in a triangle match ... **Pat Friday** beat **Mad Dog Davidson** ... **Don Kernodle** defeated **The Carolina Kid** in a cage match ... **Rick Morton** & **Billy Jack Black** beat **The Heartbreak Express** in a cage match.
(05-10-97)

—Marcus Watkins & Randolph Hedrick

KINGS MOUNTAIN—PWF at the Armory: **Terry Austin** & **Chris Hamrick** beat **Ripper** & **Dr. Feelgood** ... Eastern States champ **Rock Bottom** defeated **Black Angel** ... **Black Dragon I** beat **Texas Outlaw** ... **Flaming Youth** beat **Count Dracula** ... Heavyweight champ **Italian Stallion** (with **Madd Maxxine**) beat **George South** (with **Mama Maxxine**).
(05-09-97)

—Brock Chandler

CREEDMOOR—Southern Championship Wrestling at Hawley Middle School: **"Iceman" Chris Cannon** beat **Beau James** ... **Boris Dragoff** (with **Count Grog**) beat **Freddy Rich** ... **Brian Logan** defeated **Marc Ash** ... **Tommy Barnett** beat **David Blanchard** ... **Chris Stephenson** beat **K.C. Thunder** (with **Count Grog**) ... **C.W. Anderson** & **David Dawson** beat **Rising Sun** & **Rob McBride** ... **Jimmy Valiant** & **John Jolly** beat **Count Grog** & **Brandi Wine** when Valiant pinned Wine. Because of a prematch stipulation, Brandi Wine was supposed to have her head shaved, but Count Grog and **Beau James** saved her before it could happen. Valiant then shaved the head of his partner, Jolly, who had refused to tag in throughout the match.
(05-03-97)

—Greg Mosorjak

MOORESVILLE—Pro Wrestling Federation at the Armory: **Rick Morton** defeated **Black Ninja** ... **Terry Austin** & **Chris Hamrick** defeated **Ripper** & **Dr. Feelgood** ... **Flaming Youth** & **Masked Maniac** defeated tag team champs **The Black Dragons** to win the belts ... Heavyweight champ **Italian Stallion** (with **Madd Maxxine**) beat **George South** (with **Mama Maxxine**).
(05-03-97)

—Brock Chandler

SILER CITY—Alternative Championship Wrestling at the Jordan Matthews High School: **Carolina Kid** beat **The Scorpion** ... **Ron Studd** beat **Pez Whatley** ... **Southern Stud** & **The Nighthawk** defeated **The Lumberjacks** ... **Mr. Excellent** wrestled to a draw with **Pat Friday** ... **Frank Parker** & **Roger Anderson** wrestled **The Rising Suns** to a double-disqualification ... **"Beastmaster" Rick Link** defeated heavyweight champ **Tim Blaze** to win the title.
(04-26-97)

—Dan Parris

WILSON—NWA/Global Championship Wrestling at the County Fairgrounds: **Johnny Lightning** beat **Hard Rock Johnson** ... **Iron Chief** beat **Rob McBride** by reverse decision ... **Tech 9** & **Rip Cord** defeated **The Hell Razors** ... **Pat Anderson** pinned **David Dawson** ... **Keith Austin** battled **Rick Thunder** to a double-disqualification ... **Mike Maverick** pinned **Madd Maxx** ... **Viper** beat **C.W. Anderson** by reverse decision.
(04-19-97)

—Marcus Watkins

OHIO

WARREN—Pro Championship Wrestling at Packard Music Hall: **T.C. Reynolds** wrestled to a draw with **Lord Zoltan** ... Midget wrestler **Lil' Chuckie** beat **Dana Steel** ... **The Grim Reaper** beat **The Giant Hillbilly** ... **Cody Michaels** defeated **J.T. Lightning** ... **T. Rantula** beat **Siva Afi** ... **Kevin Sullivan** wrestled **Vincent** to a double-countout ... **The Bushwhackers** beat **Leif Cassidy** & **Salvatore Sincere**.
(04-25-97)

—Tim Harshman

PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA—ECW at the ECW Arena: **Shane Douglas** & **Bam Bam Bigelow** defeated **The Pit Bulls** ... **Axl Rotten** defeated **Chris Chetti** ... **Tracey Smothers** & **Little Guido** beat **Spike Dudley** & **B. Mahoney** ... Tag team champs **The Eliminators** defeated **PG-13** ... **Tommy Dreamer** beat **Louie Spicolli** ... **"Big" Dick** & **D-Von Dudley** defeated **The Gangstas** ... **Taz** & **Chris Candido** beat **Sabu** & **Rob Van Dam** ... Heavyweight champ **Terry Funk** won a four-way match over **Stevie Richards**, **The Sandman**, and **Raven**.
(05-10-97)

—Timothy A. Walker

PHILADELPHIA—*WCW Monday Nitro* at the CoreStates Spectrum: **Joe Gomez** & **Ice Train** (with **Teddy Long**) defeated **Ace Darling** & **Devon Storm** ... **Madusa** defeated **Luna Vachon** by disqualification when Luna kicked the referee in the groin ... **Chris Benoit** pinned **The Barbarian** (with **Jimmy Hart**) ... U.S. champ **Dean Malenko** beat **Hector Guerrero** by submission ... **Rey Misterio Jr.** pinned **Juventud Guerrera** ... TV champ **Ultimo Dragon** (with **Sonny Ono**) beat **Lenny Carlson** ... Cruiserweight champ **Syxx** beat **Prince Iaukea** by submission ... **Public Enemy** beat **High Voltage** in a streetfight ... **The Giant** pinned **Big Al** ... **"Diamond" Dallas Page** pinned **Konnan** ... **Jeff Jarrett** & **Steve McMichael** beat **Harlem Heat** by disqualification ... **Lex Luger** defeated **Kevin Nash** by disqualification.
(04-14-97)

—Bart Orkline & Michael J. DiMuzio

SCRANTON—WWF at the CYC: **Faarooq** defeated **Aldo Montoya** ... **Rockabilly** defeated **Jesse James** ... **Flash Funk** beat **Leif Cassidy** ... **Mankind** defeated **Phineas Godwinn** ... **The Blackjacks** beat **Doug Furnas** & **Phil Lafon** ... **Rocky Maivia** beat **Savio Vega** ... **Hunter Hearst Helmsley** defeated **Goldust** ... **Steve Austin**, **Ahmed Johnson**, & **The Undertaker** beat **Owen Hart**, **Brian Pillman**, & **Davey Boy Smith**.
(05-10-97)

—Leonard Elliott

NORTH VERSAILLES—Pro Wrestling Xpress at Wrestleplex: **Gator** beat **"Stone-Cold" Shirley Doe** ... **Paul Atlas** beat **Major Agony** (with **Gentleman Jo**) ... **Samu** beat **Bonecrusher** ... **"Bad Boy" Brian Anthony** beat **Quinn Magnum** ... **J.B. Destiny** & **Dennis Gregory** beat **The Lumberjacks** (with **Johnny Glitter**) ... **The Black Cat** beat **Jimmy Angel** ... **Col. Payne** pinned **Mad Mike** ... TV champ **"Beef Stew" Lou Marconi** (with **Notorious Norm**) beat heavyweight champ **T. Rantula** (with **The Black Widow**) in a non-title "I Quit" match.
(05-09-97)

—Jeff Gorman

ORWIGSBURG—Pennsylvania Championship Wrestling TV taping at Memorial Hall (highlights): **Mr. Ooh La La** defeated **Pat Shamrock** ... **Lucifer Grimm** beat **Race Richards III** ... Americas champ **Lance Diamond** defeated **Rockin' Ronnie** ... **Julio Sanchez** defeated **Glen Osbourne** by disqualification ... **Bart Gunn** defeated Americas champ **Lance Diamond** to win the title ... **Inferno Kid** beat **Dave Patera** ... **Chef D.Z. Gillespie** beat **Boogie Woogie Brown** ... **Rockin' Ronnie** beat **Chris Krueger** ... Heavyweight champ **Cheetah Master** defeated **Jihad Hussein** ... **Ace Darling** & **Glen Osbourne** beat **Mike Quackenbush** & **Inferno Kid** by disqualification ... **Bart Gunn** beat **The Honky Tonk Man**.
(05-03-97)

—Steve Glynn

SWARTHMORE—All-American Wrestling at the Cerebral Palsy Association Hall: **Diablos Macabre** pinned **Don Montoya** ... **Norm the Barfly** won a battle royal ... **Donn E. Allen** beat **Dick Trimmons** ... **Doink the Clown** pinned **Steve Corino** ... **The Overweight Lover** defeated **Norm the Barfly** ... **The Vagrants** wrestled **Flex Wheeler** & **O'Dog** to a double-disqualification ... **Mr. Big Stuff** defeated **Kid America** ... **Maverick** pinned **Tex Steele**.
(05-02-97)

—Michael J. DiMuzio

SOUTH CAROLINA

GREENVILLE—Southern Championship Wrestling at Wesley's Nightlife: **Freedom Fighter** beat **The Nightmare** ... **J.T. Williams** defeated

(Continued on page 52)

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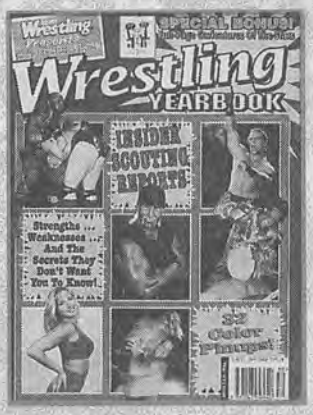

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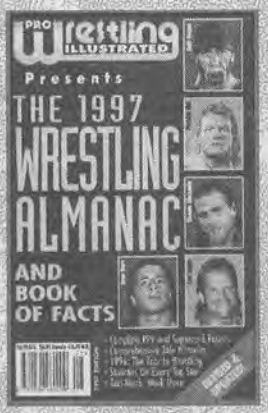

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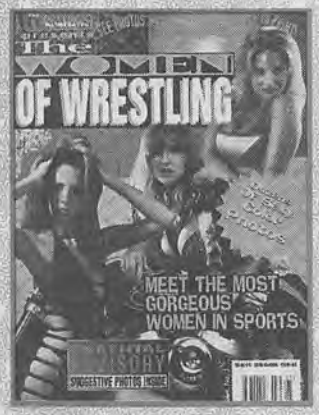

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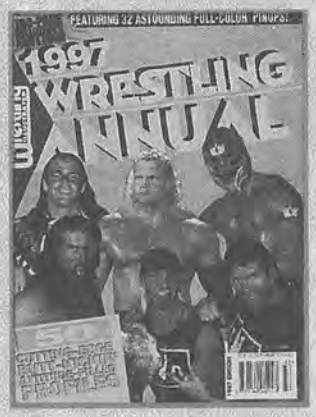

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arena reports

(Continued from page 50)

Colt Justice ... **J.W. Steele** beat **Cruiser Lewis** ... **J.J. Justice** defeated **Johnny Dollar** ... **Pez Whatley** defeated **Big Sexy** by disqualification ... **Mikki Free** beat **Brodie Chase**.
(04-21-97)

—Dan Parris

TENNESSEE

NASHVILLE—North American All-Star Wrestling at the Armory: **Tom Burton** beat **Kevin Jones** ... **PG-13** defeated **Farren Foxx** and **Kevin Jones** ... **Tracey Smothers** (managed by **Paul Adams**) beat **Billy Briggs** ... **Scufflin' Hillbilly** defeated **Farren Foxx** (with **Paul Adams**) ... **Doug Gilbert** & **PG-13** wrestled **Tommy Rich**, **Buddy Landell**, & **Zubala** to a no-contest when Gilbert threw fire at Zubula, who fled the ring.
(05-06-97)

—Timothy A. Walker

NASHVILLE—USWA at the Fairgrounds Sports Arena: **Mike Samples** defeated **Troy Haste** ... **Spellbinder** defeated **Bill Dundee** by disqualification ... **Dutch Mantel** defeated **Jerry Faith** ... **Flash Flanagan** wrestled to a double-countout with **Billy Travis** ... Southern champ **Brian Christopher** wrestled to a no-contest with **Ox Brody** ... **The Truth Commission** wrestled to a double-disqualification with **Steven Dunn** & **Paul Diamond**.
(05-03-97)

—Frank Miller

SHELBYVILLE—All-State Pro Wrestling at the Statum Cab Building: **Mr. Tennessee** defeated **Cool Breeze** ... **Brawler Rex** beat **Jeff Daniels** ... **"Nightmare" Ted Allen** defeated **Tony Falk** ... Tag team champs **Keith** & **Kenny Arden** defeated **Moondog Rex** & **Shane Morton** ... **The American Bulldogs** beat **The Bruze Brothers**.
(05-04-97)

—Justin Ramey

KNOXVILLE—Tennessee Mountain Wrestling at the Holston Elementary School: ***Tournament for the vacant tag team title, first round:*** **J.T. Coleminer** & **Chaos** defeated **The Hillbillies** ... **Tim "The Bomb" Pitner** & **"Working Man" Johnny Raynor** defeated **Eric Rose** & **Hot Dog Willie** ... **The Memphis Mafia** beat **The Black Assassin** & **Master Mayhem** ... **Dr. Dan** & **The Orderly** beat **Chris Powers** & **Ricky Rocket** ... ***Semifinals:*** Coleminer & Chaos beat Pitner & Raynor ... Memphis Mafia beat Dr. Dan & The Orderly ... ***Finals:*** Memphis Mafia beat Coleminer & Chaos for the belts ... ***Non-tournament matches:*** **Tim Reed** beat **Regulator Stone** ... Heavyweight champ **Chris Powers** beat **"Dirty White Boy" Tony Anthony**.
(04-26-97)

—Bill Needham

LEBANON—North American All-Star Wrestling at the Armory: **Farren Foxx** beat **Billy Briggs** ... **Scufflin' Hillbilly** defeated **Kevin Jones** ... ***Semifinals of the NAASW tag team title tournament:*** **J.C. Ice** & **Doug Gilbert** beat **Farren Foxx** & **Kevin Jones** ... **The Wild Boys** beat **Scufflin' Hillbilly** & **Chris Michaels** ... ***Finals:*** Ice & Gilbert defeated The Wild Boys when **Paul Adams** threw powder in **Ben Jordan's** face by mistake, which allowed Ice to roll up Jordan for the pin.
(04-26-97)

—Timothy A. Walker

VIRGINIA

RICHMOND—WWF In Your House (Cold Day in Hell) pay-per-view at the Coliseum: **Hunter Hearst Helmsley** beat **Flash Funk** ... **Mankind** forced **Rocky Maivia** to submit to the mandible claw ... **Ahmed Johnson** pinned **Crush**... **Ahmed Johnson** defeated **Savio Vega** by disqualification when Vega disabled Johnson's right shoulder with repeated attacks with a chair ... **Faarooq** pinned **Ahmed Johnson**. Had Ahmed won all three matches against the **Nation of Domination**, the group would have been forced to disband ... **Ken Shamrock** forced **Big Van Vader** to submit to a leglock ... World champ **The Undertaker** pinned **Steve Austin** after a "tombstone" piledriver ... ***In a bout not shown on the pay-per-view:*** **The Road Warriors** defeated World tag team champs **Owen Hart** & **Davey Boy Smith** by disqualification.
(05-11-97)

—Ray Ney

INTERNATIONAL

CANADA

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA—Canadian Wrestling Federation at Chalmers Community Center: **"Preppy" Jeffrey Donovan** defeated **E.Z. Ryder** ... **Mike Myers** pinned **Todd Bullet** ... **Iron Man** & **Steel Carnage** defeated **Bobby Collins** & **Alex Rain** ... North American champ **Bobby Jay** pinned **Brother Midnite** ... Tag team champs **Vance Nevada** & **J.T. Atlas** wrestled to a double-disqualification with **Bobby Bolton** & **Robby Royce**.
(05-08-97)

—Vern May

REGINA, SASKATCHEWAN—Hardcore Wrestling at the Exhibition Auditorium: **Sammy Sadistic** beat **Craig Harris** ... **Dream Warrior** defeated **Da Gangsta** ... **Zoltan Ludwig** wrestled to a double-countout with **Dr. James Grand** ... **J.T. Atlas** beat **Scotty Simms** ... **Bobby Bolton** beat **Rex Roberts** by disqualification ... Western Canadian provincial champ **Todd Myers** beat **Vance Nevada** ... **John Cozman** wrestled to a double-disqualification with **Crusher Carlsen** ... **Vance Nevada** & **Scotty Simms** (substituting for **Johnny Smith** & **Beef Wellington**) defeated **The Dark Angels** to win the tag team title.
(05-05-97)

—Vern May

GREENFIELD PARK, QUEBEC—NCW at the Super Mercato: **The Dream Warriors** defeated **The Cosanostra** ... **Phil Belanger** beat **Black Eagle** ... **The Sweet Boys** beat **Dream Killer** & **Marc the Grizzly** ... **Frank Blues** defeated **Golem the Giant** ... **Daniel Leon** beat **Romeo the Playboy** ... **Mike Lyons** beat **The Chameleon** ... **Iceman** defeated **Syl the Sadist**.
(05-02-97)

—Bertrand Hebert

GREENFIELD PARK, QUEBEC—NCW at Super Mercato Flea Market: **Romeo the Playboy** beat **The Ninja** ... **Marc the Grizzly** beat **Golem the Giant** ... **The Sweet Boys** beat **The Dream Warriors** ... **Daniel Leon** beat **Frankie the Mobster** ... **Dream Killer** defeated **Chameleon** by disqualification ... **The Cult** beat **Frank Blues** & **Iceman**.
(04-25-97)

—Bertrand Hebert

JAPAN

OSAKA—New Japan at the Osaka Dome: **Koji Kanemoto**, **Shinjiro Otani**, **Dick Togo**, **Mens Teioh**, & **Hanzo Nakajima** defeated **Gran Hamada**, **Super Delfin**, **Great Sasuke**, **Niro Honaga**, & **El Samurai** in a best-of-three-falls match ... **Kazuo Yamazaki** beat **Kendo Kashin** ... **Shiro Koshinaka** beat **Kengo Kimura** ... **Tatsumi Fujinami** defeated **Hiroyoshi Tenzan** ... **NWO Sting** & **Syxx** defeated **Tadao Yasuda** & **Takashi Iizuka** ... **Scott Norton** & **Marcus Bagwell** defeated **Lex Luger** & **The Giant** ... **Masa Chono**, **Scott Hall**, & **Kevin Nash** defeated **Rick** & **Scott Steiner** & **Keiji Muto** ... **Antonio Inoki** & **Tiger King** defeated **Yoshiaki Fujiwara** & **Jushin Liger** ... **Satoshi Kojima** & **Manabu Nakanishi** beat IWGP tag team champs **Riki Choshu** & **Kensuke Sasaki** to win the belts ... IWGP heavyweight champ **Shinya Hashimoto** defeated **Naoya Ogawa**.
(05-03-97)

—Koichi Yoshizawa

THIS MONTH IN HISTORY
OCTOBER

CALIFORNIA

LOS ANGELES—NWA at Olympic Auditorium: **Man Mountain Mike** defeated **The Outlaw** & **Jack Venus** in a handicap match ... **Kenji Shibuya** & **Masa Saito** defeated **Suni War Cloud** & **Mando Lopez** ... **Black Gordman** pinned **The Great Snuka** ... **Mil Mascaras** beat **Fidel Castillo** ... **Goliath** beat **Freddie Blassie**.
(10-02-79)

—PWI archives

NEW YORK

NEW YORK—WWWF at Madison Square Garden: **Ernie Ladd** pinned **Baron Scicluna** ... World champion **Bruno Sammartino** defeated **Waldo Von Erich** ... **Jean Du Bois** beat **Larry Albano** ... **Mitsu Arakawa** & **Prof. Toru Tanaka** defeated **Antonio Pugliese** & **Dominic DeNucci** ... **Victor Rivera** pinned **Joe Cox** ... **Gorilla Monsoon** defeated **Killer Kowalski**.
(10-27-69)

—PWI archives

PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA—NWA's Halloween Havoc pay-per-view at the Civic Center: **Tom Zenk** pinned **Mike Rotundo** ... **The Samoan Swat Team** defeated **The Midnight Express** & **Steve Williams** ... **"Wildfire" Tommy Rich** beat **The Cuban Assassin** ... World tag team champions **The Freebirds** beat **The Dynamic Dudes** ... **Doom** (with **Woman**) defeated **Rick** & **Scott Steiner** ... U.S. champion **Lex Luger** pinned **Brian Pillman** ... **The Road Warriors** beat **The Skyscraper** (with **Teddy Long**) by disqualification) ... In a Thunderdome match, **Sting** & **Ric Flair** defeated **Terry Funk** & **The Great Muta** (**Bruno Sammartino** was the special referee).
(10-28-89)

—PWI archives

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MATCH OF THE WEEK
SID WARNS BRET: "STAY AWAY!"

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4501/03-97

(Continued from page 5)

Eric Bischoff seems to be really enjoying his time as one of the leaders of the NWO, but reader Annette Thomas wonders how he'll feel when the NWO falls apart and he's left without a job.

mits. Scott Hall and Kevin Nash are acting like they want to form their own group within the NWO. Randy Savage is only concerned with "Diamond" Dallas Page. The others could care less since they belong to the hottest group in wrestling today.

But where does this leave Eric Bischoff? Everyone else has their own agenda within the NWO, and it seems like Bischoff is the only one living in the perfect NWO dream world. Although he puts on a smiling face every time he's near a camera, I think he's definitely wondering whether he made the right move by abandoning his cushy WCW executive position just for a chance to wear black and try to act cool. I bet that every time Hogan, Hall, and Nash disagree, he feels a pang of guilt for not being the one to stop this mutant unit. Maybe Bischoff's secretly kicking himself for giving in to the easy life of greed, gluttony, and glamour.

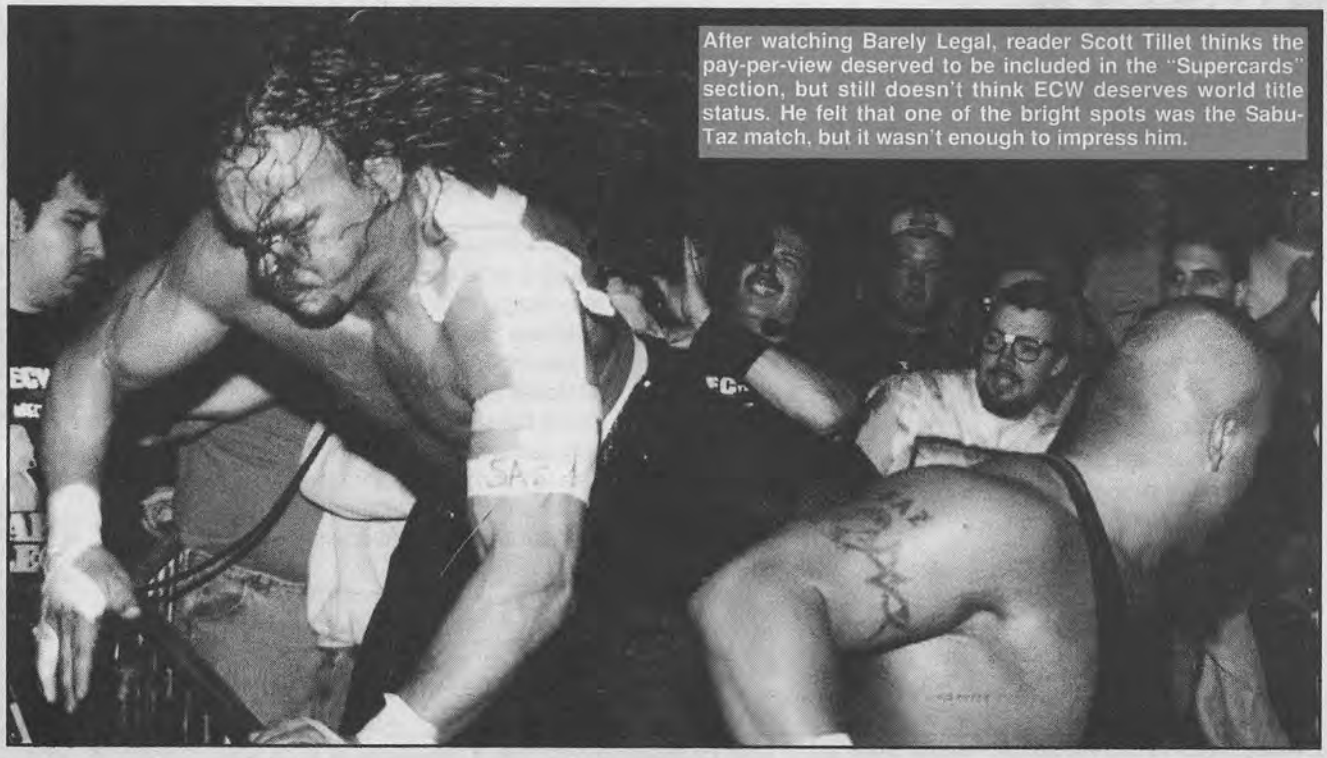
It's time for Bischoff to realize that the end is near for his precious group, despite their frequent spouting of "NWO for life." He needs to realize that he left a great job to satisfy his ego, but it may have cost him his career as a great WCW executive. Fame and fortune are both fleeting, and the NWO won't last forever. Unfortunately, great careers like Bischoff's will be the casualties of this war.

ANNETTE THOMAS
North Miami, FL

MAYBE NEXT TIME

I bought ECW's Barely Legal pay-per-view to see what all the hoopla is about, and I was disappointed. I do believe it was worthy of being included within the "Supercards" section, but I'm still not convinced that ECW deserves world title status.

This pay-per-view was my first chance to see ECW action, and I wasn't overly impressed. While I was intrigued seeing these guys for the first time, I found it to be nothing special. There were some bright spots, like Terry Funk



After watching Barely Legal, reader Scott Tillet thinks the pay-per-view deserved to be included in the "Supercards" section, but still doesn't think ECW deserves world title status. He felt that one of the bright spots was the Sabu-Taz match, but it wasn't enough to impress him.

There's no question that the WWF has had a hard time controlling Big Van Vader recently. Manager Paul Bearer, reader Holly Clark notes, even struggled to keep him in line.

winning the heavyweight title and Bill Alfonso turning against Taz, but for all that I've heard, I figured this would blow all of the other pay-per-views out of the water. It didn't.

Maybe I'll enjoy ECW's next pay-per-view more than this one.

SCOTT TILLET
Brooklyn, NY

STOP VADER!

Big Van Vader has become so unpredictable that I think it's time for something to be done before he hurts himself or someone else. In just the past few years, he has gone from just being a violent person in the ring to being a menace to those outside the ring.

I used to think that what he needed was a manager like Paul Bearer, who specializes in handling the careers of bizarre wrestlers. Now it's obvious that even he can't control Vader for too long. The next logical step would be to petition WWF President Gorilla Monsoon to do something about this beast, but I don't think that would do any good. Maybe it's time for Vader to be banned from the sport before someone gets maimed.

HOLLY CLARK
Reno, NV ☐

WE WANT Bad Guys!

They may be in the minority, but there are some editors who believe that there MUST be a magazine devoted to those wrestlers, managers, and valets who couldn't care less about the rules of this sport or the wishes of most fans. There was a magazine for them, but for now, at least, the majority view of the editorial board prevails.

With the climbs to power of such groups as the New World Order and The Nation Of Domination, might we one day see the return of *Bad Guys*? For now, those of you who subscribe to this view of the sport can at least relish these historic back issues of *Wrestling Rulebreaker* and *Bad Guys*, The Magazines With A Bad Attitude.

Wrestling 93: Rulebreaker (Spring 1993): **Bobby Heenan & "Narcissist" Lex Luger: The Total Package Of Brain & Brawn:** Color Pinup: Steve Austin vs. Rick Steamboat. Plus: Cactus Jack, Rick Rude, Jerry Lawler, Rulebreaker's Insider With Joey Styles, Big Van Vader, Hall of Fame—The Sheik.

Wrestling 93: Rulebreaker (Fall 1993): **Yokozuna: He Flattened Hulk Hogan ... Crushed Hulkamania Forever ... Spit In The Face Of America ... And We Love It!** Color Pinup: Paul Orndorff vs. Ron Simmons. Plus: Four Horsemen, 10 favorites we'd like to see turn dirty, baddest man poll, Rick Rude-Dustin Rhodes, Giant Gonzalez, Jerry Lawler, Hall of Fame—Fred Blassie.

Wrestling 93: Rulebreaker (Winter 1993): **Brat Patrol! Wrestling 93 Targets The Sport's Most Pampered Players.** Plus: Big Van Vader, Ric Flair, Steve Austin, Lex Luger, The Kid, Heavenly Bodies, Hall of Fame—Harley Race.

Wrestling 94—Rulebreaker: Forget About Those Other Guys—Here Are The Real Year-End Awards. (Spring 1994): 1993—The Year Of The Rulebreaker. Plus: Sting, Brian Lee, Hall of Fame—Killer Kowalski.

Wrestling Bad Guys (Winter 1994): **King Kong Bundy—Monster With A Mission.** Color Pinup: Bon Backlund. Plus: Tommy Dreamer, UFOs, Hulk Hogan, Abdullah the Butcher, Big Van Vader, Hall of Fame—Ivan Koloff.

Wrestling Bad Guys (Spring 1995): **Vader's Vow Of Violence: "I've Begun My Systematic Destruction Of Hulk Hogan!"** Color Action Gallery: Sabu. Plus: Kevin Sullivan, Bob Backlund, Ric Flair, Jim Cornette & The Rock 'n' Roll Express, Tatanka, fat wrestlers, Hall of Fame—George Steele.

Wrestling Bad Guys (Summer 1995): **WCW In Hogan's Control: The Inmate Is Running The Asylum!** Color Action Gallery: Big Van Vader. Plus: WCW Uncensored, Bret Hart-Jerry Lawler, Bubba Rogers, the next Flair, Hall of Fame—Fritz Von Erich.

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4464/02-97

(Continued from page 21)

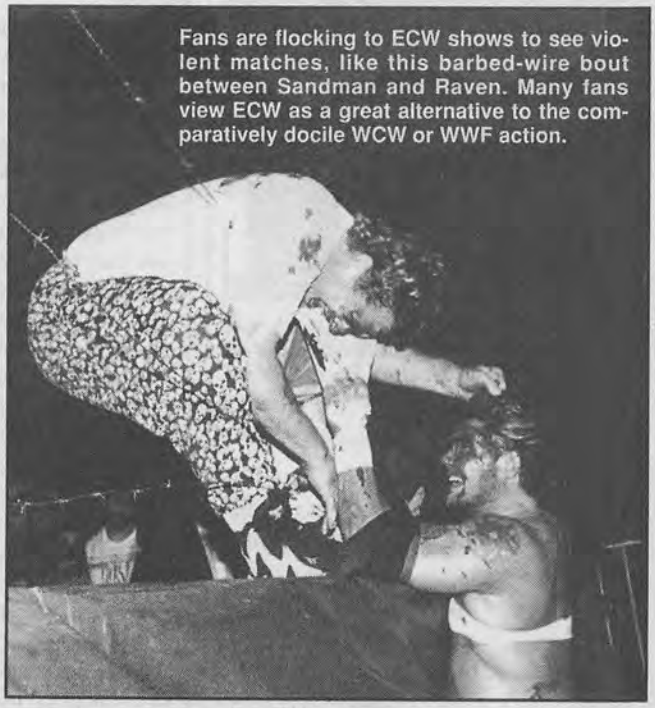
gone, but they haven't come, at least not over the past 20 years. For decades, the WWF, NWA, and AWA ruled wrestling. The AWA is gone; no federation has replaced it.

There is also a feeling among wrestling insiders that if ECW becomes too popular, it runs the risk of getting noticed by local and federal regulators for its high violence level. Law enforcement officials might try to censure ECW in the same manner in which they censured the Ultimate Fighting Championships.

If ECW isn't already a major force on the wrestling scene, then why did WCW just happen to notice and eventually sign Chris Jericho (shown dropkicking Masa Chono) when he was competing in that promotion?

"I am surprised, quite frankly, [Barely Legal] did as well as it did," Eric Bischoff said during a Prodigy chat session. "I think ... everyone at ECW should be proud of what they accomplished and should be congratulated for succeeding in spite of all the adversity and obstacles that were in their way. I think they did a great job with what they had to work with. I'll also tell you that if the WWF and WCW would have put that product on, we would have never heard the end of the comments and criticism."

There are probably some people inside the WWF who feel the same way. They're not taking ECW *that* seriously. But if ECW is not a serious threat, why have both the WWF and WCW raided that federation for talent? Chris Benoit, Chris Jericho, Dean Malenko, Eddy Guerrero, Rey Misterio Jr., Mankind, Flash Funk, and Steve Austin have all stopped there recently.



Fans are flocking to ECW shows to see violent matches, like this barbed-wire bout between Sandman and Raven. Many fans view ECW as a great alternative to the comparatively docile WCW or WWF action.

Even WWF and WCW marketing and promotion experts admit that ECW is only a few small steps away from making a major run at the big time. Those steps might include:

1. Getting a one-hour show on a major cable network.

2. Running a major card in a significant arena, such as Madison Square Garden, Boston's FleetCenter, or Philadelphia's Spectrum, and attract a significant crowd.

3. Using the pay-per-view bucks to sign more major stars who would fit well into ECW.

"If all of those things happened, it would be a brand new ballgame," said David Gerhardt, PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED'S vice president of marketing. "Is it out of the realm of possibility? Of course not. ECW isn't a little guy anymore. They'll probably have their first million-dollar gross pay-per-view within the next year. That makes them a player."

The war between the WWF and WCW could have some outside interference. The little guy with a bad attitude is starting to make his move. □

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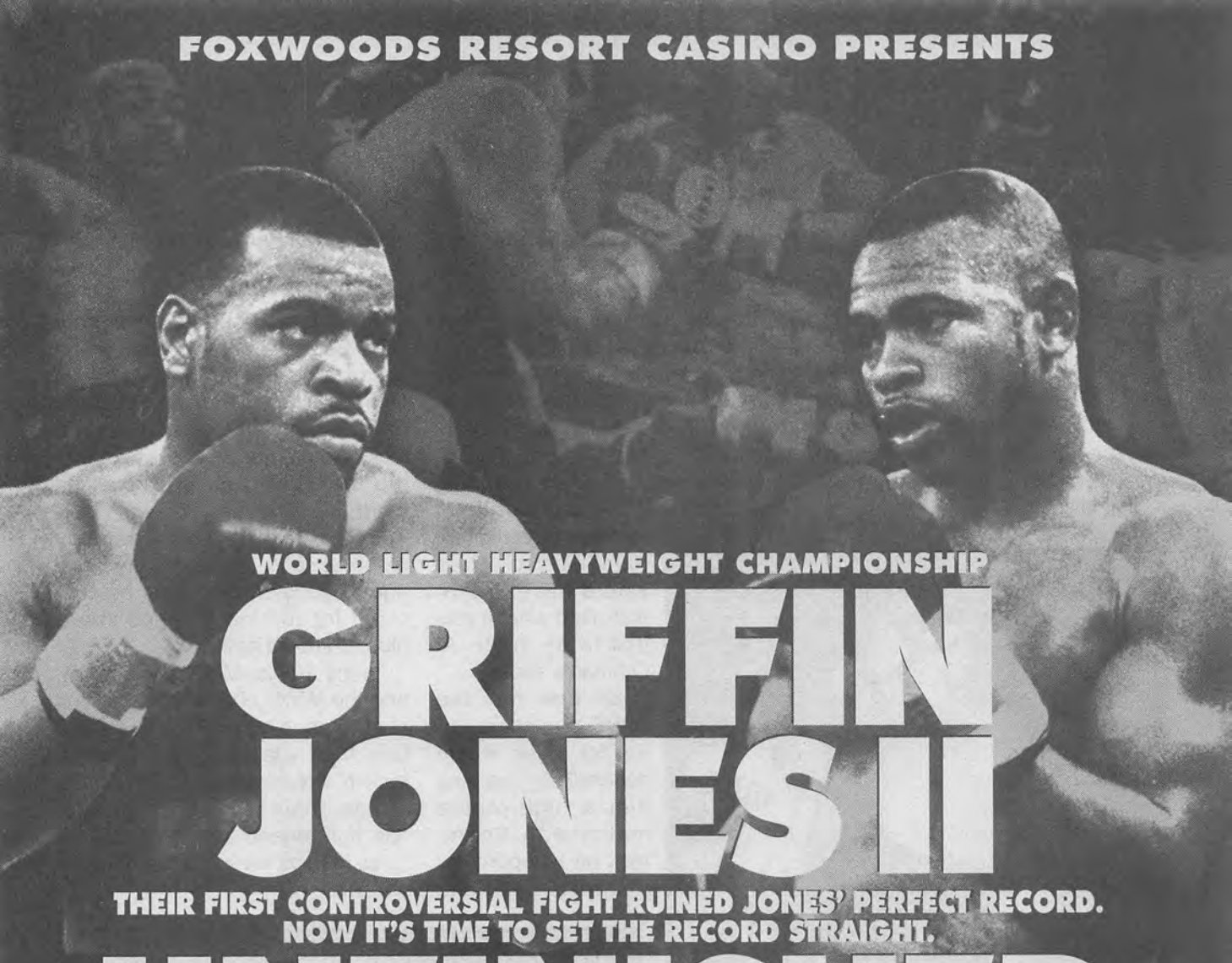

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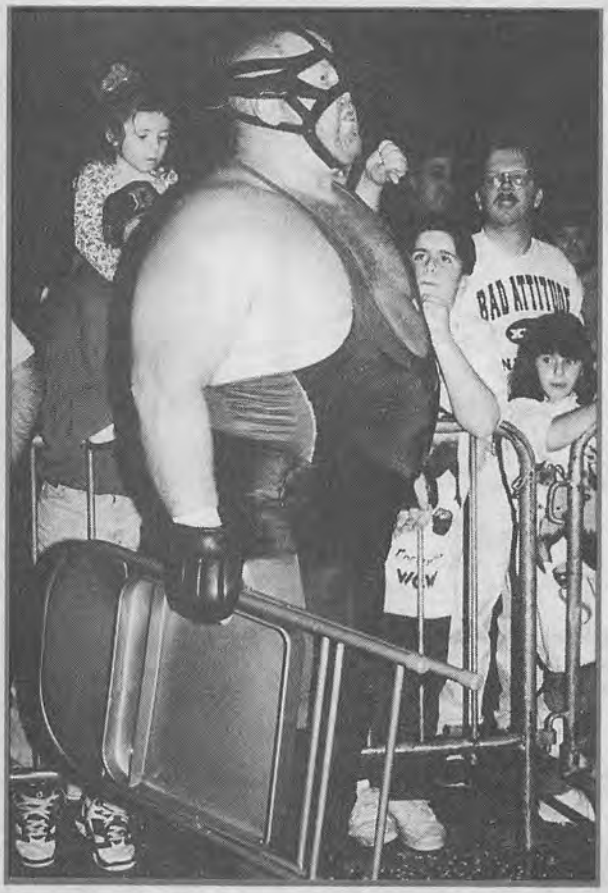
FIGHTERS SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

(Continued from page 34)

Only two months after the *20/20* debacle, then-WWF champion Hulk Hogan dropped comedian/actor Richard Belzer on the floor while demonstrating a front facelock during Belzer's television show, *Hot Properties*. The host received nine stitches in his head and an undisclosed amount of money following his filing of a $5-million lawsuit.



But the WWF powers-that-be haven't been as quick to bury the Vader story as they were in the cases of Shultz and Hogan.

In this case, the WWF has met the issue head-on. McMahon has given several interviews, and federation broadcasters freely discussed (and even made light of) the event on television.

One would expect Vader to assume a lower profile or change his ways. Not so. Vader seemed more belligerent than ever. He seemed proud of what he had done.

On one edition of *Raw*, Jim Ross asked Vader if he felt any remorse about the whole affair. Was he truly sorry for doing what he did? Did he regret the ordeal his own family endured?

Vader responded by grabbing Ross' Stetson and glasses. If not for the intervention of Ken Shamrock, Ross would have known first-hand what it was like to be in Mr. Al Othman's shoes.

So how has the WWF punished Vader for these recent actions? By granting him a high-profile match with Shamrock on pay-per-view (he lost)! And the WWF's condemnations of Vader have done nothing but inflate his reputation.

In fact, at about the same time the National Hockey League was suspending Buffalo Sabres goalie Dominik Hasek from the playoffs for attacking a reporter outside a locker room, the WWF was exploiting the Kuwait fiasco for all its worth. Tacky? Yes. Clever? Definitely. If the WWF is ultimately responsible for any monetary damages, McMahon shouldn't be criticized for turning a minus into a plus ... should he?

In the 1980s, McMahon, Hogan, and the WWF encouraged millions of children to "say their prayers and take their vitamins." Now, as the rock 'n' wrestling generation comes of age, there is a new message: "Go right ahead and do the crime ... as long as we get some publicity out of it." □

The WWF knew what it was getting when it signed Vader last year: a man who loves using chairs as weapons (above) and sometimes gets so mad that he feels the need to destroy furniture (right). Now it's trying to use Vader's volatility to best advantage.

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4479/02-97

(Continued from page 23)

Ultimo Dragon picked up his first major victory in WCW at Starrcade '96, when he defeated Dean Malenko for the WCW cruiserweight belt. Back then, he held nine different titles.

They should be afraid of me.

APTER: Why should they be afraid of you?

ROSENBAUM: Posturing, Bill. Don't you get it?

APTER: What do you mean by posturing?

ROSENBAUM: He's showing an attitude. Acting tough.

DRAGON: I do not have to act tough. If the NWO wants to come after me, I am here. If they want Muto, they know where to find him. If we are a team together, we will beat any team we face. It's that simple. Ultimo Dragon is not an easy man to beat.

LENKER: But there's one question everybody is wondering about: Are you here to stay, or is this a short-term thing? You lost that J-Crown to Jushin Liger in Japan, and then you lost the TV title to Lord Steven Regal. There's been some talk about you going back to Mexico.

DRAGON: What gives?

ROSENBAUM: Sorry, Ultimo, but it's been a tough day here at the question farm. Let's take it one question at a time. Are you here to stay?

DRAGON: Nobody knows what the future brings. I'm here for now. I don't know where I'll be later. Liger has those eight belts, and I want to get them back, but for now, I'm in WCW, and everyone should know that I am a threat to every title in WCW and every title in Japan!

ROSENBAUM: Very good. How about returning to Mexico?

DRAGON: Not likely. Maybe someday, but not now.

LENKER: Why not?

DRAGON: Because this is not the time. You cannot do everything.

APTER: Let's talk about the night you won the TV title. That night, Rey Misterio Jr. had been attacked by Lord Steven Regal, and Prince Iaukea, the WCW TV champion at the time, came to Misterio's rescue. Iaukea was injured during the incident, but insisted on wrestling his match against you later on ...

DRAGON: Stupid Iaukea. He should mind his own business.

APTER: You're saying that he got himself into trouble.

DRAGON: Who else? He is friends with Misterio. So what. He should look out for himself and only himself.

APTER: But his ribs were badly injured.

ROSENBAUM: I think that's what Ultimo is saying, Bill. He's saying that Iaukea wouldn't have injured his ribs if he had minded his own business.

Though he's known mostly for his martial arts skills, Dragon is also a master of several painful submission holds. He uses one of them on Malenko here.

DRAGON: That's correct. He knew he had to wrestle me, and if

he had tried to back out, we would have taken his belt away anyway.

LENKER: Seriously doubtful. At the very worst, the title would have been held up.

DRAGON: He signed to wrestle me, so he must wrestle me. It's not my fault if he gets hurt doing something stupid.

ROSENBAUM: We have to ask you about an incident at a TV taping recently. Sonny Ono interfered in your match and kicked Villano IV a few times while he was outside the ring. You pushed Ono after the match and walked back to your dressing room separate from him.

DRAGON: You guys don't give up. Let me answer you a little more directly. *(raises voice)* If Sonny Ono wants to wrestle some of these guys himself, he is welcome to. I do not need help, but there is no trouble here!

For now, Dragon's number-one priority is regaining a major WCW title. If Sonny Ono has his way, however, Dragon will soon have a new tag team partner: Keiji Muto.

ROSENBAUM: Okay, if you're not going to answer questions truthfully, maybe we should end this right here.

DRAGON: Hey, that's fine with me! □

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PWI DREAM

It's been about six years since the last one, but get ready for the third sensational *PWI* Dream Tournament! Sixteen of our sport's greatest competitors are squaring off in a magnificent single-elimination tournament—and you get to decide who wins!

WHAT WOULD HAPPEN if wrestling's greatest stars went head-to-head in a single-elimination tournament? No doubt it would be one of the greatest events in wrestling history and would capture the imagination of every fan.

It last happened in the July 1991 issue of PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED. Sixteen of the sport's top stars squared off for nine months, with Sting beating Barry Windham, Jerry Lawler, Lex Luger, and Hulk Hogan to grab the crown!

A lot has happened since then. Most of the wrestlers in the 1991 tourney have changed federations at least once. Can Sting repeat as Dream Tournament champion six years later? It's up to you to decide!

Here's how it works: We've set up a tournament bracket containing 16 of the top stars in the sport today. There will be eight first-round matches, four quarterfinal matches, two semifinals, and a championship final. In each round, you make a choice as to who would win each hypothetical match, taking into account each wrestler's style and skill. We'll tally the votes, and the wrestler who wins each match advances to the next round.

In this issue, we've listed the first-round pairings (determined by random draw). Simply circle the name of the wrestler you think would win each match, fill out the form on the opposite side of this page, attach any additional comments you may have, and send it to: Dream Tournament, c/o PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED, Box 1148, Fort Washington, PA 19034. Or, for those of you who have on-line capability, you can cast your vote in cyberspace. Over the world wide web, the address is: http://www.cybrsports.com/wrestle/pwi. America Online subscribers can locate the voting area by using the keyword GS WRESTLING.

The deadline for ballots is August 10, 1997. We'll print the first-round results and quarterfinal pairings in the Holiday 1997 issue of *PWI*; the semifinals will be held in the March 1998 issue and the final in the June 1998 issue. Complete results will be printed in the August 1998 issue.

Next month, we'll present the pairings for the first round of the *PWI* Dream Tag Team Tournament. That tournament will run on alternating months with the singles tournament (which allows you to get your votes in on time to be tabulated). But for now, read the following capsule summaries of the 16 competitors, pick your winners, and send in your ballot.

The *PWI* Dream Tournament is a dream come true!

THE COMPETITORS:

Dean Malenko (WCW, 5'9", 216 pounds). Current WCW U.S. champion. Outstanding mat wrestler. Very serious and focused. Uses the Texas cloverleaf as a finisher.

Owen Hart (WWF, 5'10", 227 pounds). Current WWF Intercontinental champion and co-holder of the WWF World tag team title. Wrestles equally well on the mat and in the air. Occasionally uses the "sharpshooter."

Shinya Hashimoto (New Japan, 5'11", 287 pounds). Current IWGP heavyweight champion. Strong and tough. Likes using suplexes, dropkicks, and DDTs.

Brian Pillman (WWF, 6', 226 pounds). Terrific aerial wrestler who is deceptively strong. Very unpredictable and very mean. Has an excellent dropkick.

Hulk Hogan (NWO, 6'8", 275 pounds). Current WCW World champion. Among the strongest wrestlers in the world, but rarely wrestles nowadays. Still uses that legdrop as a finisher.

Ahmed Johnson (WWF, 6'4", 305 pounds). Not a great technical wrestler, but he is extremely powerful. Stamina is questionable. "Pearl River Plunge" is a tremendous finisher.

Mitsuharu Misawa (All-Japan, 5'11", 228 pounds). Current All-Japan Triple Crown champion. Regarded by many as one of the best scientific wrestlers in the Orient. Very tough and durable.

Lex Luger (WCW, 6'5", 265 pounds). Has one of the greatest physiques in wrestling. A former WCW World, U.S., World tag team, and TV champion. Susceptible to injuries. "Torture rack" is his finisher.

Rob Van Dam (ECW, 6', 227 pounds). Possesses a fine combination of martial arts and aerial skills. Has grown more and more cocky in recent months, so overconfidence can be a problem. Split-legged moonsault is his finisher.

Dallas Page (WCW, 6'5", 260 pounds). One of the hardest working men in the sport. A solid, confident mat wrestler with good power. "Diamond cutter" is one of wrestling's most dangerous finishers.

Terry Funk (ECW, 6'1", 247 pounds). Reigning ECW heavyweight champion. This 53-year-old is tougher than many men half his age. Among his favorite moves/holds are the spinning toehold, DDT, and moonsault.

Steve Austin (WWF, 6'2", 241 pounds). Foul-mouthed trash-talker is perhaps the WWF's best technical wrestler. Loves brawling as much as wrestling, though. "Stone-Cold stunner" is his finisher.

Sting (WCW, 6'2", 260 pounds). Used to be one of the best all-around wrestlers in the world, but he hadn't competed at all in '97 as of press time. Good stamina. Finishers include "Scorpion deathlock" and "Scorpion deathdrop."

The Undertaker (WWF, 6'9", 328 pounds). Current WWF World champion. Has very few scientific skills, but has plenty of power and durability. Stamina is questionable. Finisher is the "tombstone" piledriver.

The Giant (WCW, 7'4", 430 pounds). Former WCW World champ is one of the hardest men to knock down. Very intimidating because of his size. Choke-slam is a lethal finisher.

Bret Hart (WWF, 5'11", 235 pounds). One of the best all-around wrestlers in WWF history. Knee injuries have taken their toll on him over the years. "Sharpshooter" is his finisher.

TOURNAMENT

FAN BALLOT

DEAN MALENKO

OWEN HART

SHINYA HASHIMOTO

BRIAN PILLMAN

HULK HOGAN

AHMED JOHNSON

MITSUHARU MISAWA

LEX LUGER

FIRST-ROUND WINNERS

FIRST-ROUND WINNERS

ROB VAN DAM

DALLAS PAGE

TERRY FUNK

STEVE AUSTIN

STING

THE UNDERTAKER

THE GIANT

BRET HART

Mail ballot to:

DREAM TOURNAMENT
c/o PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED
Box 1148
Fort Washington, PA 19034

CIRCLE FIRST-ROUND WINNERS ONLY!

Name:_____ **Age:**___

Address:_____

City:_____ **State:**___ **Zip:**_____

Additional comments welcome! The deadline for first-round ballots is **August 10, 1997.** First-round results will be presented in the Holiday 1997 issue of PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED, on sale October 7. Look for the first round of the *PWI* Dream Tag Team Tournament next month!

PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED

PWI's Top 10

Owen Hart

TOP 10

1. **THE UNDERTAKER**
   328, parts unknown
   (1) WWF World champion
2. **DEAN MALENKO**
   216, Tampa, FL
   (4) U.S. heavyweight champion
3. **OWEN HART**
   227, Calgary, Alberta
   (3) WWF Intercontinental champion
4. **SYXX**
   212, Minneapolis, MN
   (9) WCW cruiserweight champion
5. **STEVE AUSTIN**
   241, Dallas, TX
   (7) No. 3 contender: WWF World title
6. **THE GIANT**
   430, parts unknown
   (5) No. 3 contender: WCW World title
7. **FAAROOQ**
   291, Perry, GA
   (-) No. 2 contender: WWF World title
8. **LORD STEVEN REGAL**
   247, Blackpool, England
   (-) WCW TV champion
9. **TERRY FUNK**
   247, Amarillo, TX
   (10) ECW heavyweight champion
10. **DIAMOND DALLAS PAGE**
    260, Tampa, FL
    (8) No. 4 contender: WCW World title

TAG TEAMS

1. **STEVE AUSTIN & SHAWN MICHAELS**
   Combined weight: 475 pounds
   (-) WWF World tag team champions
2. **RICK & SCOTT STEINER**
   Combined weight: 483 pounds
   (5) No. 1 contenders: WCW World tag title
3. **THE ROAD WARRIORS**
   Combined weight: 560 pounds
   (3) No. 1 contenders: WWF World tag title
4. **SCOTT HALL & KEVIN NASH**
   Combined weight: 646 pounds
   (-) WCW World tag team champions
5. **OWEN HART & DAVEY BOY SMITH**
   Combined weight: 472 pounds
   (1) No. 2 contenders: WWF World tag title
6. **THE ELIMINATORS**
   Combined weight: 459 pounds
   (4) ECW tag team champions
7. **THE BLACKJACKS**
   Combined weight: 582 pounds
   (10) No. 3 contenders: WWF World tag title
8. **HARLEM HEAT**
   Combined weight: 550 pounds
   (7) No. 2 contenders: WCW World tag title
9. **THE GANGSTAS**
   Combined weight: 456 pounds
   (-) No. 1 contenders: ECW tag title
10. **DOUG FURNAS & PHIL LAFON**
    Combined weight: 475 pounds
    (9) No. 4 contenders: WWF World tag title

WCW

World Champion:
HULK HOGAN
(C) 275, Venice Beach, CA

1. **DEAN MALENKO** *(1) 216, Tampa, FL*
2. **LORD STEVEN REGAL** *(9) 247, Blackpool, England*
3. **THE GIANT** *(3) 430, parts unknown*
4. **DIAMOND DALLAS PAGE** *(4) 260, Tampa, FL*
5. **SYXX** *(5) 212, Minneapolis, MN*
6. **JEFF JARRETT** *(-) 230, Nashville, TN*
7. **REY MISTERIO JR.** *(10) 140, San Diego, CA*
8. **CHRIS BENOIT** *(8) 218, Edmonton, Alberta*
9. **MENG** *(-) 294, Tonga*
10. **STEVE MCMICHAEL** *(-) 270, Austin, TX*

WWF

World Champion:
THE UNDERTAKER
(C) 328, parts unknown

1. **OWEN HART** *(1) 227, Calgary, Alberta*
2. **FAAROOQ** *(-) 291, Perry, GA*
3. **STEVE AUSTIN** *(2) 241, Dallas, TX*
4. **MANKIND** *(7) 277, Truth or Consequences, NM*
5. **AHMED JOHNSON** *(4) 305, Pearl River, MS*
6. **HUNTER HEARST HELMSLEY** *(8) 279, Greenwich, CT*
7. **SAVIO VEGA** *(9) 260, Vega Alta, Puerto Rico*
8. **GOLDUST** *(6) 254, Austin, TX*
9. **KEN SHAMROCK** *(-) 235, San Bernardino, CA*
10. **BIG VAN VADER** *(3) 450, Denver, CO*

USWA

USWA Champion:
JERRY LAWLER
(-) 234, Memphis, TN

1. **BRIAN CHRISTOPHER** *(1) 230, Memphis, TN*
2. **DUTCH MANTEL** *(9) 224, Oil Trough, TX*
3. **MIKE SAMPLES** *(10) 252, Indianapolis, IN*
4. **BILLY TRAVIS** *(-) 218, Houston, TX*
5. **NEW RAZOR** *(4) 345, Detroit, MI*
6. **NEW DIESEL** *(5) 285, Miami, FL*
7. **KING REGINALD** *(C) 233, Memphis, TN*
8. **FLASH FLANAGAN** *(-) 221, Detroit, MI*
9. **SPELLBINDER** *(-) 273, parts unknown*
10. **BRAKUS** *(6) 275, Berlin, Germany*

ECW

ECW Champion:
TERRY FUNK
(C) 247, Amarillo, TX

1. **STEVIE RICHARDS** *(2) 227, Philadelphia, PA*
2. **THE SANDMAN** *(6) 244, Philadelphia, PA*
3. **SHANE DOUGLAS** *(4) 240, Pittsburgh, PA*
4. **RAVEN** *(1) 235, Short Hills, NJ*
5. **TOMMY DREAMER** *(5) 245, Yonkers, NY*
6. **TAZ** *(3) 248, Red Hook, NY*
7. **LOUIE SPICOLLI** *(9) 248, Los Angeles, CA*
8. **CHRIS CANDIDO** *(-) 226, Carteret, NJ*
9. **SABU** *(8) 220, Bombay*
10. **B. MAHONEY** *(-) 361, Carteret, NJ*

OFFICIAL RATINGS

Top 10 and Tag Team ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board. Most Popular and Most Hated ratings are based on nationwide telephone and arena surveys of wrestling fans and on the volume and character of mail that comes to our offices. All other ratings are based on the official current positions of challengers to the top title in each category; certain titleholders receive an automatic spot in the ratings. The number in parentheses indicates a wrestler's position in that category last issue; (–) indicates that the wrestler was not rated in that category last issue. while (C) indicates the wrestler was champion in that category last issue.

MOST POPULAR

1 STEVE AUSTIN
241, Dallas, TX
Last issue: unrated

2 STING
260, Venice Beach, CA
Last issue: No. 1 Most Popular

3 SHAWN MICHAELS
234, San Antonio, TX
Last issue: No. 7 Most Popular

4 RIC FLAIR
243, Charlotte, NC
Last issue: No. 8 Most Popular

5 RODDY PIPER
247, Glasgow, Scotland
Last issue: No. 3 Most Popular

6 THE UNDERTAKER
328, parts unknown
Last issue: No. 4 Most Popular

7 DIAMOND DALLAS PAGE
260, Tampa, FL
Last issue: No. 5 Most Popular

8 AHMED JOHNSON
305, Pearl River, MS
Last issue: No. 2 Most Popular

9 THE GIANT
430, parts unknown
Last issue: No. 10 Most Popular

10 GOLDUST
254, Austin, TX
Last issue: No. 9 Most Popular

MOST HATED

1 BRET HART
235, Calgary, Alberta
Last issue: No. 1 Most Hated

2 HULK HOGAN
275, Venice Beach, CA
Last issue: No. 3 Most Hated

3 BRIAN PILLMAN
226, Cincinnati, OH
Last issue: unrated

4 KEVIN NASH
356, Detroit, MI
Last issue: No. 2 Most Hated

5 RANDY SAVAGE
237, Sarasota, FL
Last issue: No. 5 Most Hated

6 SCOTT HALL
290, Miami, FL
Last issue: No. 7 Most Hated

7 OWEN HART
227, Calgary, Alberta
Last issue: No. 6 Most Hated

8 SYXX
212, Minneapolis, MN
Last issue: No. 8 Most Hated

9 DAVEY BOY SMITH
245, Leeds, England
Last issue: unrated

10 STEVE MCMICHAEL
270, Austin, TX
Last issue: unrated

NEW JAPAN

IWGP Champion:
SHINYA HASHIMOTO
(C) 287, Gisu, Japan

1—MASA CHONO
(1) 235, Tokyo, Japan

2—KEIJI MUTO
(3) 245, Tokyo, Japan

3—RIKI CHOSHU
(2) 246, Yamaguchi, Japan

4—SCOTT NORTON
(–) 360, Minneapolis, MN

5—JUSHIN LIGER
(9) 206, Hiroshima, Japan

6—NAOYA OGAWA
(–) 286, Yamanishi, Japan

7—TATSUMI FUJINAMI
(6) 234, Oita, Japan

8—SHIRO KOSHINAKA
(5) 225, Tokyo, Japan

9—IMPOSTOR STING
(–) 251, parts unknown

10—HIROYOSHI TENZAN
(7) 270, Tokyo, Japan

ALL-JAPAN

Triple Crown Champion:
MITSUHARU MISAWA
(C) 228, Saitama, Japan

1—KENTA KOBASHI
(2) 261, Tokyo, Japan

2—TOSHIAKI KAWADA
(1) 245, Tizhigi, Japan

3—AKIRA TAUE
(3) 265, Tokyo, Japan

4—STEVE WILLIAMS
(4) 265, Norman, OK

5—JUN AKIYAMA
(7) 230, Hiroshima, Japan

6—YOSHINARI OGAWA
(10) 202, Fichigi, Japan

7—ROB VAN DAM
(–) 227, Battle Creek, MI

8—JOHNNY ACE
(5) 250, San Bernardino, CA

9—MASA FUCHI
(9) 225, Tokyo, Japan

10—GARY ALBRIGHT
(8) 343, Billings, MT

For period ended May 30, 1997

CUMULATIVE RATINGS

These ratings are based on the past 10 issues of this magazine. We have examined our ratings for each of these issues in our Top 10 and Tag Team categories only, and assigned each position a point value: 10 points for a first-place rating, nine for second place, and so on. The point values for all wrestlers in the past 10 issues have been compiled, with a possible maximum of 100 points. Each issue we'll present the top five finishers in each category. While our regular ratings reflect the past month, these cumulative ratings give an indication of wider trends in the sport.

SINGLES

1—LEX LUGER.....57 points
2—SID VICIOUS.....55 points
3—SHAWN MICHAELS.....54 points
4—THE UNDERTAKER.....45 points
5—THE GIANT.....43 points

TAG TEAMS

1—OWEN HART & DAVEY BOY SMITH.....91 points
2—SCOTT HALL & KEVIN NASH.....66 points
3—HARLEM HEAT.....50 points
4—THE ELIMINATORS.....45 points
5—HENRY & PHINEAS GODWINN.....39 points

CONSEJO MUNDIAL LUCHA LIBRE: Champion—Steele; 1—Shocker; 2—Headhunter A; 3—Rayo De Jalisco Jr.; 4—El Hijo Del Santo; 5—Ultimo Dragon; 6—Negro Casas; 7—Silver King; 8—Felino; 9—Dr. Wagner Jr.; 10—Atlantis.

CENTURY WRESTLING ALLIANCE: Champion—Kevin Sullivan; 1—Tony Rumble; 2—Tony Atlas; 3—Vic Steamboat; 4—El Mascarado; 5—Abdullah The Butcher; 6—Storm Trooper; 7—Knuckles Nelson; 8—Pink Assassin; 9—Mohammed Hussein; 10—Salvatore Sincere.

NORTH AMERICAN ALL-STAR WRESTLING: Champion—Title Vacant; 1—Colorado Kid; 2—Tommy Rich; 3—Doug Gilbert; 4—Buddy Landell; 5—J.C. Ice; 6—Chris Michaels; 7—Scufflin' Hillbilly; 8—Ben Jordan; 9—Farren Foxx; 10—Cody Montana.

PENNSYLVANIA CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING: Champion—Cheetah Master; 1—Bart Gunn; 2—Ace Darling; 3—Julio Sanchez; 4—Lance Diamond; 5—Boogie Woogie Brown; 6—Judd the Stud; 7—Pat Shamrock; 8—Glen Osbourne; 9—Mike Quackenbush; 10—Mr. Ooh La La.

PRO WRESTING FEDERATION: Champion—Italian Stallion; 1—Madd Maxxine; 2—George South; 3—Flaming Youth; 4—Terry Austin; 5—Gladiator II; 6—Chris Hamrick; 7—Rock Bottom; 8—Masked Maniac; 9—Cruel Connection II; 10—Tyrone Knox.

PROMO AZTECA: Champion—Title Vacant; 1—Konnan; 2—La Parka; 3—Psicosis; 4—Cien Caras; 5—Hector Garza; 6—Mascara Sagrada; 7—Rey Misterio Jr.; 8—Blue Panther; 9—Vampiro Canadiense; 10—Dandy.

ULTIMATE CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING: Champion—Chris Chavis; 1—Falcon Coperis; 2—Jim Neidhart; 3—Tommy Cairo; 4—Bruce Hart; 5—Barry Houston; 6—Paul Lauria; 7—Black Sheepe; 8—Jimmy Deranged; 9—Mike Norman; 10—The Blackhart.

RATINGS ANALYSIS

Every month, this column will tell fans how we go about rating over 200 wrestlers in 19 different categories. It is a behind-the-scenes look at the most important–and respected–ratings system in the sport. This column is vital reading for all wrestling fans.

Is Raven leaving his ECW nest? Rumors, rumors, rumors. We had plenty of them to deal with at press time, many of them concerning ECW wrestlers. First and foremost, it looked like the chances were very good that two-time former heavyweight champion **Raven** would be headed to WCW (possibly to sign with the **New World Order**) by summer's end, so don't be surprised if he soon makes his last appearance in the ECW ratings.

Could Raven succeed in WCW using his violent style? Maybe, but remember that he has done well in that federation before. He was one of only four men to hold the now-defunct WCW light heavyweight title (that championship was only active for one year), but he wasn't nearly as vicious and bloodthirsty in the ring back in 1991-92.

Another rumor had wrestlers such as **Sabu**, **Stevie Richards**, and **The Gangstas** (**New Jack** and **Mustafa Saed**) also bound for WCW soon. Richards is a possibility, but Sabu didn't find WCW much to his liking when he was there in 1995, and The Gangstas seem content where they are. There doesn't seem to be much to the rumors involving those men.

Hart of gold. In the September 1997 issue of *The Wrestler*, we gave a big "Thumbs Up" to **Owen Hart** for winning the Intercontinental title from **Rocky Maivia** without cheating or relying on any outside interference.

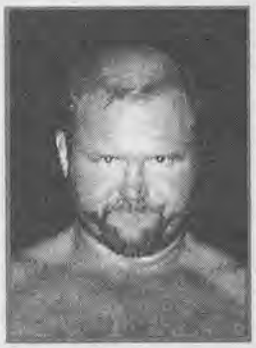
Owen Hart

It was one of the more impressive wins of his career. He should be proud of that accomplishment. But it didn't take more than a few minutes for him to realize what a bind his victory put him in. All of a sudden, he was the holder of two titles in the WWF, the Intercontinental and the World tag team (with brother-in-law **Davey Boy Smith**).

This means he will be expected to defend both belts on a regular basis, and according to WWF sources, he might be forced to defend both his titles the same night on some occasions. Owen and Davey Boy ran into trouble less than a week after Owen captured the I-C belt. They had previously signed a contract to face the tandem of **"Psycho" Sid Vicious** and **Steve Austin** a handful of times, but since Sid was still out nursing a back injury at the time, the WWF chose **Ahmed Johnson** as a replacement.

Fortunately for Owen and Davey Boy, they were able to convince WWF promoters to make these bouts non-title bouts, arguing that they had prepared for Austin and Sid and signed contracts to meet Austin and Sid. They lost to Austin and Ahmed three times in the first week in May alone. They've also struggled in matches with **The Road Warriors**.

So this puts us in a quandary. Neither the WWF World tag team champions nor the WCW World tag team champions are looking particularly strong right now, as **Kevin Nash** and **Scott Hall** went more than a month without defending their title at all, due to Hall's mysterious sabbatical. Neither duo is deserving of the top spot in our tag team top 10 right now.



Arn Anderson

A forgotten man. **Arn Anderson's** name has not appeared in our ratings at all in some time, and, sadly, it looks like there's a chance it will never appear there again. "The Enforcer" had neck surgery early in April, and although there were some complications and Anderson did have to endure some intense pain, he is finally starting to recover and is able to walk.

That's the good news.

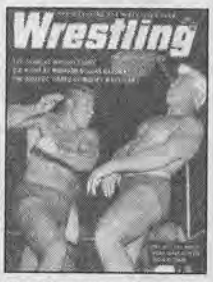
The bad news is that the recovery process figures to last a long time, and it will likely be many months before doctors will be able to tell him if returning to the ring as a competitor is even something he can think about. Even though **The Four Horsemen** appear to be fairly strong right now and are all making regular appearances in our ratings, Anderson's leadership has been missed. It would be a shame if Arn had to retire.

That's it for now. If you have any questions or comments relating to what you see on our ratings pages or right here, we'd love to hear from you. Write to: "Ratings Analysis," c/o PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED, Box 1148, Fort Washington, PA 19034. □

COLLECTOR'S CORNER

Wrestling historians, rejoice! Some of the back issues in this ad have not been offered for sale for more than a decade—but a recent transfer of warehouse inventory from New York to Pennsylvania uncovered a small supply of these classic publications! Obviously, supplies are extremely limited, so all magazines will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis only. Prices quoted are based on the rarity of the issue and the number of available copies. For speediest service, use VISA or MasterCard or make payment by money order or certified check. Please don't send cash! Don't miss out on this once-in-a-lifetime chance to own a memorable piece of wrestling history! Once they're gone, they'll never be offered for sale again—so order today!

WRESTLING REVUE



Published between 1959 and 1964, *Wrestling Revue* is acknowledged as one of the finest series of wrestling magazines ever produced. These beautiful editions, all edited and published by Stanley Weston (founder of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated, The Wrestler,* and *Inside Wrestling,* among so many other titles) set a standard for all wrestling magazines that followed, and are available now for the first time in many years!

Fall 1961 Edouard Carpentier challenges Floyd Patterson, Bruiser vs. Cowboy Bob Ellis, The Zebra Kid, killer holds, action at The Kiel, Nick Bockwinkel vs. Dr. X, and full-color action of the Bastiens vs. Shires & Nelson. **$25**
December 1961 An extensive Buddy Rogers interview, Bobo Brazil, Fred Blassie, Pepper Gomez, the Torres brothers, Whipper Watson, "Sailor" Art Thomas, Ricki Starr, plus a full-color centerfold of Mark Lewin & Don Curtis. **$35**
February 1962 Dick Beyer, Mitsu Arakawa, Edouard Carpentier vs. Lou Thesz, Angelo Poffo, a five-girl battle royal, Don and Jackie Fargo, Billy Zabyszko, Larry Chene, plus a full-color centerfold of Guy & Joe Brunetti. **$30**
April 1962 Wilbur Snyder, Luis Martinez, Madison Square Garden closeup, Yulie Brynner, Billy Wolfe, Don Leo Jonathan vs. Pat O'Connor, closeup on midgets, plus a full-color centerfold of Bearcat Wright. **$30**
June 1962 Eddie Graham, Verne Gagne, wrestlers vs. boxers, Dory Dixon, Yukon Eric, Tony Lanza, Lorraine Johnson vs. Kay Noble, Skull Murphy & Brute Bernard, The Crusher, plus a full-color centerfold of Red Bastien. **$25**
December 1963 The Destroyer, "Maniac" Mark Lewin, Paul Diamond, Ernie Ladd, Judy Grable, Bill Watts, Pat O'Connor, Don Duffy, The Scufflin' Hillbillies, plus a full-color centerfold of Lou Thesz. **$35**
February 1964 Edouard Carpentier vs. Killer Kowalski, Florida wrestling, Mad Dog Vachon, Fabulous Moolah, Fritz Von Erich, Rene Goulet, Cyclops, plus a full-color centerfold of Bruno Sammartino. **$35**

BOXING ILLUSTRATED/ WRESTLING NEWS

In November 1958, Stanley Weston launched *Boxing Illustrated/Wrestling News,* an innovative concept in sports magazines. Each issue's content consisted of approximately 60 percent boxing and 40 percent wrestling, resulting in the most complete magazine for ring afficianados the world has ever known.

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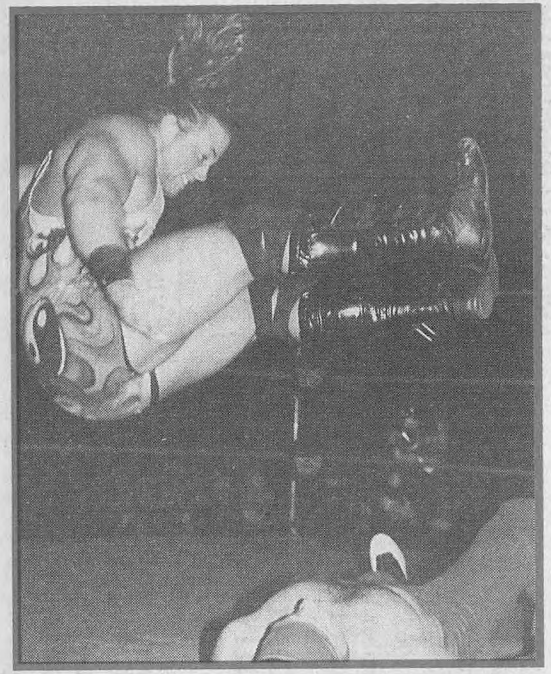


Rob Van Dam was victorious over Matt Hardy in his WWF debut in May, but some of his fellow ECW wrestlers were not too happy to see him on *Raw Is War*.

ROB VAN DAM IMPRESSIVE IN WWF DEBUT

Other ECW Wrestlers Not Happy With Him

By LIZ HUNTER

NEWARK, DE—Rob Van Dam had been saying for months on ECW telecasts that he was ready to start wrestling on Monday nights—obviously meaning that he wanted to go to either WCW or the WWF—and he got what he wanted when the WWF allowed him to wrestle on *Raw*.

Van Dam was billed as "Mr. Monday Night" by Jerry Lawler when he came to the ring for his WWF debut against Jeff Hardy. As Van Dam dominated Hardy, Lawler made a point of saying how smart Van Dam was for trying to make it in the big time rather than being satisfied with his standing in ECW. ECW wrestlers who saw the show weren't nearly as complimentary toward Van Dam.

"He's got a big ego problem," said Taz. "He thinks he's a star because he wrestled on a WWF show. Big deal. If he's such a great talent, how come he could never beat me here? I can't wait to get my hands on him again. I can't get wait to get the Taz-mission on him again. I might never let him out of it."

"If he's so obsessed with wrestling on Monday nights," Pit Bull II said, "then let him stay with the WWF. They can give him fancy entrance music and a great new outfit or whatever he wants. We don't need him."

"Everybody wants me," Van Dam said. "I have to say I was absolutely brilliant in my WWF debut. Maybe I'll decide to sign a long-term contract soon."

As of press time, Van Dam hadn't signed with the WWF and was still planning to compete regularly for ECW.

Family Feud Starts In PWF

By DAVE LENKER

CHARLOTTE, NC—For more than a year, Madd Maxxine has been dominating most of the male competition in the Pro Wrestling Federation, but she has recently come up against maybe her toughest foe to date in the ring: her own mother.

Mama Maxxine is now seconding George South for many of his matches with PWF heavyweight champion Italian Stallion, who has Madd Maxxine on his side. South and Mama have also wrestled Stallion and Maxxine in a series of mixed matches.

For months, South and Madd Maxxine were a rulebreaking tandem, but she switched her alliances to Stallion after getting into a few arguments with South. When Mama Maxxine first arrived on the scene, dressed just like her daughter, she also sided with Stallion. Then South got to her.

"I told her that Maxxine became a success because she was tough and mean and nasty," said South, "and Mama Maxxine agreed with me."

"It's up to me to knock some sense into my daughter," Mama said. "I didn't raise my kid to be a do-gooder."

Madd Maxxine poses with her mother, Mama Maxxine, in happier times. They're currently feuding in the PWF.

Wright Lashes Out At Fans!

By ANDY RODRIGUEZ

BALTIMORE, MD—Fans who saw the May 12 edition of *WCW Monday Nitro* witnessed a new Alex Wright—a cocky, spiteful, and sometimes cowardly "Das Wunderkind"—but Wright says he had a good reason for turning rulebreaker.

"Everyone around here kept telling me to do things the right way and be patient and my time would come," he fumed. "When's that time coming? I get good matches when I first got here, but not now. The fans expect me to do good by them, but what did they do for me? They don't appreciate my talent."

Wright taunted the fans as he made his way to the ring for a match pitting him and Ice Train against Konnan and Hugh Morris. Then whenever Wright got in trouble, he ran to his corner, tagged Train before Train was even ready, and scurried out of the ring. Finally, Wright and Teddy Long, Train's manager, got into an argument and Wright took off, leaving Train to get pinned.

"You watch—I'm gonna be a huge star now," he said. "I can do it all myself."

PG-13 Show Up In ECW

By DAVE ROSENBAUM

PHILADELPHIA—PG-13—J.C. Ice and Wolfie D—didn't fare too well in their first match in ECW (they lost to The Eliminators, the reigning ECW tag team champs, in May), but they said they're anxious to return and want another shot at Perry Saturn and John Kronus.

"We want to prove we're the best tag team in the world," said Ice. "We're sick of hearing about how The Eliminators say there's no one better than them. We know we fit in well there. The more mayhem the better. If you want to fight in the crowd and use all kinds of weapons, we're up for that."

"We've been takin' a good look at a lot of the guys in ECW," said Wolfie D. "They ain't nearly as tough as they think they are."

The two teams do have a bit of a history. The Eliminators came to the USWA, where PG-13 had become a mainstay, in the spring of 1994 and won the tag team title from Brian Christopher and Eddie Gilbert. Six weeks later, Ice and Wolfie defeated them for the belts.

AROUND THE GLOBE

YOKOHAMA, JAPAN

Who said Cactus Jack "died" when Mankind was born in the WWF? For at least one more night, Mankind became Cactus again, as he teamed with Terry Funk and The Gladiator in a losing effort against Atsushi Onita, Masato Tanaka, and Wing Kanemura. Funk had a rough night, as after throwing a fireball at Onita, he was piledrived onto a table by his rival.

HAMILTON, ONTARIO

Whether they want to admit it or not, Steve Austin and Ahmed Johnson formed a very effective tag team this spring, beating WWF tag team champs Owen Hart and Davey Boy Smith in a series of non-title matches. At first, both men agreed to team even though they admitted they hated each other. After a few victories, though, Ahmed said they might have to think about teaming more regularly.

OSAKA, JAPAN

Eric Bischoff spent a good portion of the few days he spent in Japan in April trying to convince everyone he was on the verge of signing Keiji Muto to an NWO contract. Apparently he wasn't successful in that regard. But the NWO did have a good trip. Kevin Nash, Scott Hall, and Masa Chono beat the Steiners and Muto at a big Osaka Dome show, and on the same card, Marcus Bagwell and Scott Norton upset The Giant and Lex Luger.

HOT SHOT

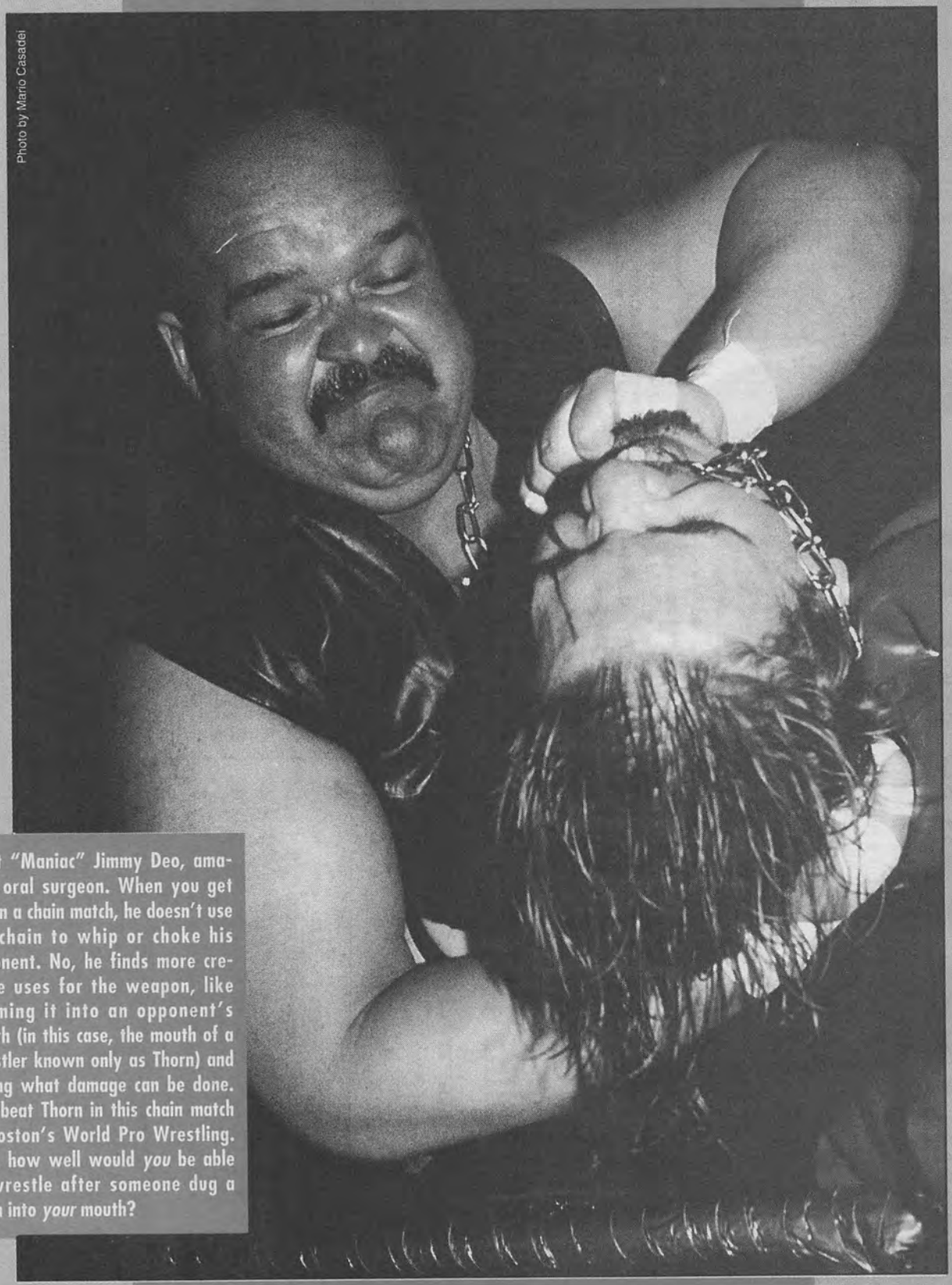
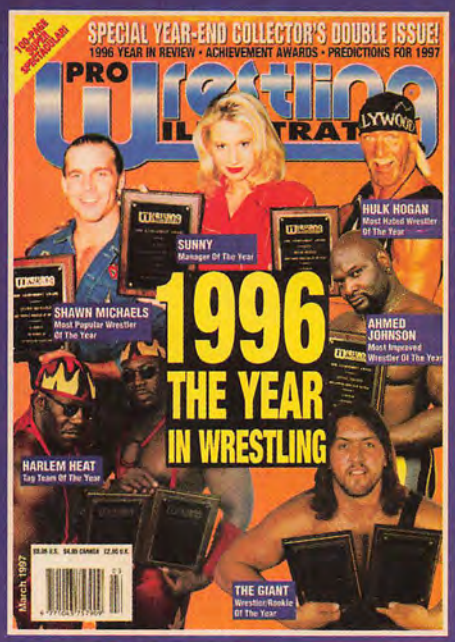


Photo by Mario Casadei

Meet "Maniac" Jimmy Deo, amateur oral surgeon. When you get him in a chain match, he doesn't use the chain to whip or choke his opponent. No, he finds more creative uses for the weapon, like jamming it into an opponent's mouth (in this case, the mouth of a wrestler known only as Thorn) and seeing what damage can be done. Deo beat Thorn in this chain match in Boston's World Pro Wrestling. Hey, how well would *you* be able to wrestle after someone dug a chain into *your* mouth?



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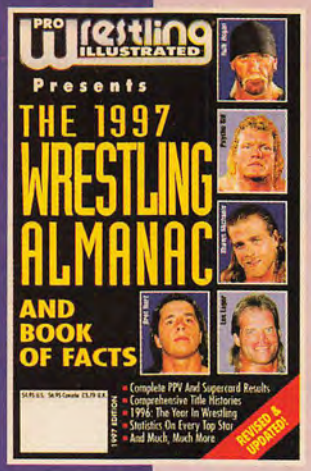
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